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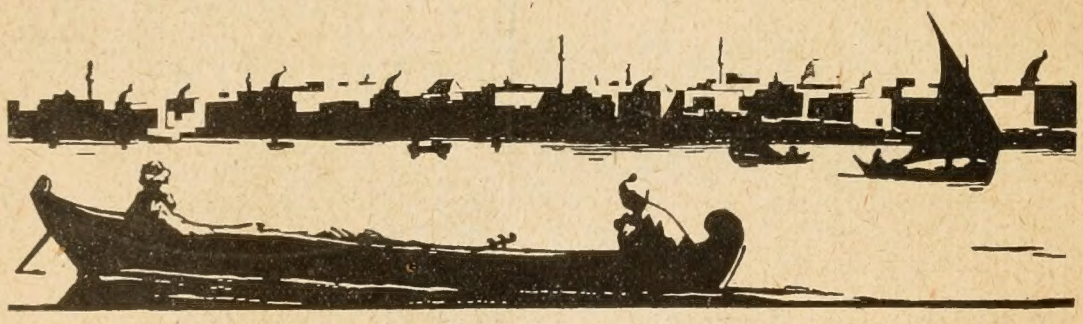

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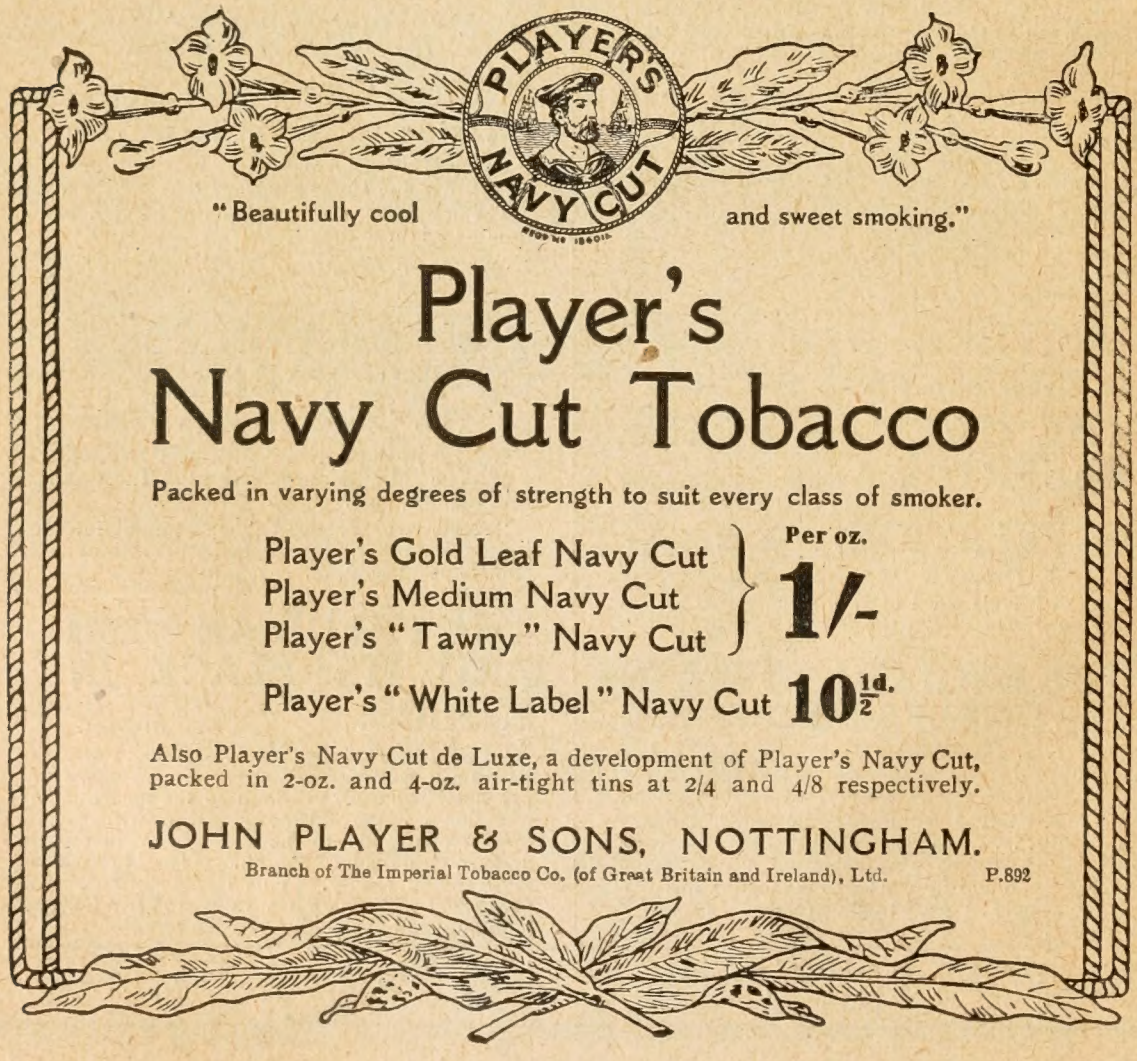

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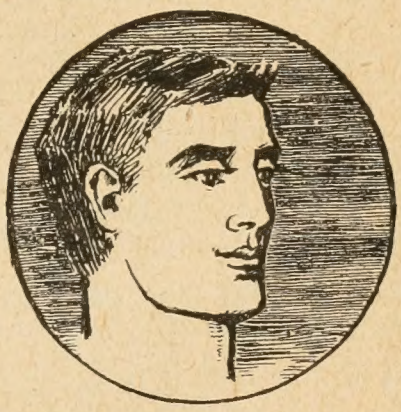

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As lang's my arm.

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In commerce I believe in taking the public into my confidence. Therefore I will state my policy for 1921.

Trade is precarious and unemployment rampant because we cannot trade internationally until the foreign rates of exchange are stabilized, and we cannot trade to any extent internally until the fluctuating markets have reached a fixed level.

That is why I have determined, irrespective of profit or loss, to stabilize the price of West-End Lounge Suits.

To arrive at the irreducible minimum for 1921, it is essential that the public should realise that West-End tailoring labour is double, and the cost of materials is treble that of pre-war. These are facts.

I have fixed my minimum for Lounge Suits at Ten Guineas. At this figure there will be little personal profit to me. This is a fact known by my Chartered Accountants now, and one which will be known by the Inland Revenue later.

At this minimum figure of ten guineas, a comprehensive selection of first quality materials will be offered, and the more expensive worsteds and cashmeres will be sold at twelve to fourteen guineas.

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THE

ENGLISH REVIEW

APRIL, 1921.

Old England

The History of One Day in a Village

By Bernard Gilbert

MY DEAR ORAGE,—

When I first discussed with you my idea of presenting an English village as a whole, I little guessed that it would lead me on to such an immense task.

Balzac made an heroic attempt to depict the France of his day. Despite his giant industry he needed ten lives to achieve his intention, and in these so much more complex days the attempt would be hopeless. It is possible, however, to portray the unit with which I have dealt and to show therein the factors and problems of the land which are basic in rural England.

To do this I had to freeze my unit and exhibit it motionless. To show it in action would take as many novels as there are characters.

The village is our largest social unit, being a society in which every person knows everything about everyone, and in which the whole of the members are in personal relation. Our next unit is the small market-town of some 4,000 inhabitants, in the least of which are a number of distinct circles; but the village, running up to 1,500 souls, is a self-contained cosmos, a large family, and has no *beyond*. Its soul is coherent and complete.

I have taken such a village at one moment toward the end of the war and endeavoured to give a camera-obscura presentment of the multitudinous intrigues, ambitions, desires, disputes, relationships, interests, and all the social, political, financial, sexual, and religious factors which thread the fabric so closely.

My inspiration was drawn from the writers who have influenced me most: Bunyan, Defoe, and Landor. If Bunyan had been so minded we should now have a picture of the village of Elstow beyond price. Landor could have done it wonderfully: his *Conversations* are almost entirely static; and although he became dynamic when he spread his wings, his general inclination is toward static presentment.

When I came face to face with my problem I searched for predecessors. Hardy's *Dynasts* takes an epoch as its unit, and is essentially dramatic; Crabbe's *Borough*, though covering to some extent a rural scene, was not what I was seeking for, and gave me no help. The *Spoon River Anthology*, though a strong and immensely striking work, is only a series of detached epitaphs; and Masters made no attempt to present a community.

As there are no prior examples of the static form discoverable, I had to deal with the technical problems as best I could. The characters explain themselves and throw light on each other, and all of them together set forth their village as an entity.

In my youth I was taught that there was an omniscient Being to whom

everything was present at each instant; and it was this state of complete comprehension with which I wished to endow the reader. Such a state supposes a knowledge of each character and each relationship and a simultaneous view of everyone of a vast complexity of interweaving strands.

There is no hero or heroine: no one character is more important than another; nor is there any villain. It is the ancient democracy of the Feudal System; the one which has stayed longest in known history and which has its roots deeper and more firmly in the soil of Old England than town-dwellers can guess or know. BERNARD GILBERT.

Hampstead, 1921.

PREFACE.

The following extracts are from the work which will appear in book form shortly. The complete book contains some hundreds of characters. There is no "action," but the whole "occurs" at one moment in one day towards the end of the German War.

I.—THE EARL.

(Owner of Fletton Estate and Village.)

I am monarch of all I survey,
Or—very nearly—
From Fletton Towers' topmost turret
Your eye may roam
Over the fairest stretch of England;
Farm after farm, field after field,
Rivers, lakes, commons,
Rolling and swelling toward the horizon;
All mine!
The tenantry and tradesmen touch their hats as I pass by,
Or fly to open gates when my hounds are out,
Nor raise a murmur at the slight damage
Said to be caused by game
(Allowed for in the rent):
My grandfather, nine times removed,
Whose name I bear, and not, I hope, unworthily,
Geoffrey Llewellyn Aubrey Warrington Coote,
Was lord and master of these lands,
With feudal rights and powers,
Long ere the Guelphs came up from Hanover.
I have preserved those rights religiously,
And hope to pass them on untouched
To my dear son—my eldest—
Who will uphold the family of Coote,
Which, like an ancient oak,

With roots below the surface deeply spread,
Stretches its arms in majesty as far as eye can see!
There is, alas! one drawback to my happiness:
Just where yon coppice runs,
I deeply mourn to say,
One Mogg, a low-lived Welshman,
By some mean knavery secured the freehold,
Leaving it to his son;
And though *all means* have been attempted
By Ferrett, my trusty lawyer,
He will not yield, the stubborn brute;
And owing to the sham humanitarianism
Which blights the present century
I cannot exercise my undoubted privileges to remove him,
So that yon coppice desecrates the view,
A dagger at the heart of Fletton Towers.
It spoils my peace!
My son, my clever boy, must get it;
Then I shall rest in peace beside eleven forefathers.

II.—The Viscount.

(The Earl's eldest son and heir. Age 20. Unmarried. Invalided from War.)

Everyone goes round on tiptoe,
Looking at me as if I were stuffed,
Because I'm heir to all this flummery of tenants, game-keepers, butlers, footmen, family-tree, old lineage, noblesse-oblige, and bend-sinister:
What everybody in England longs for, fights over, plots about;
Offer their immortal souls and much more precious youth and health for:
The ownership of a Great Estate.
A real Kingdom—
With even the proverbial rebel in the shape of Mogg,
And all the historic business of the Feudal System,
Handed straight on from Charles the First
Without the slightest deviation.
I have less use for it
Than anyone who breathes.
I'm for California myself,
Where a little nest-egg

Of sixteen thousand pounds from great-aunt Wincey
Has already been transferred.
The bullet through my ankle ended all fighting,
And this Foreign Office billet at Washington is most handy;
I shall stick it out until the War's over,
Then vanish quietly from the scene,
And leave this lot to Fitz:
'Twill suit him like a glove:
And I shall be free!
To-morrow I'm for London
Where in a Registry Office
Gwinny Mogg will marry me quietly
And we shall get ten days' honeymoon—
The darling!
She follows me across as soon as possible.

III.—(Mrs.) Polly Bugg.

(Pawnbroker's widow from Bolton: Mildred Pinion's mother.)

Mildred can hint as much as she likes
But I'm not going to be pushed in the corner when anyone calls,
Nor yet go to bed when there's a "dinner" on:
The money's mine as long as I live,
And I'm good for another forty years *at least.*
Laurie's a genteel lad,
But he hasn't the guts of a dormouse,
And like all weak men will slip away unless Mildred is careful.
I saw him the other night pretending to shut a window for the little housemaid:
And we all know what comes of that;
I must speak to her mother—
A most respectable charlady . . .
As I said, I won't be pushed aside!
The Vicar likes talking to me because my common sense "refreshes him."
And, indeed, my manners were looked on as most refined in Bolton.
Such a nice gentleman stopped me this morning by the Cemetery;
He's doing welfare work under the Salvation Army;

And, hearing my name mentioned everywhere, made bold
to ask for my sympathy:
Wasn't it gratifying?
He said my five pounds would go quite a long way!

IV.—Laura Cook.

(Albert's sister. Age 38. Spinster. Lives with father. Salvation Army. Liberal.)

It's too bad of Hannah, when she knows how I feel about
Norman,
Not to let him lodge with us instead of her;
She doesn't need the money like we do:
(He never pays, anyway.)
And with only Dad and me here, we could manage
beautiful!
She's jealous because he lets me have the tambourine;
But doesn't she do most of the praying?
She's got one man under her thumb;
And I've a right to one as well.
I may be thirty-eight, but I don't look it!
His wife (that left him eight years ago) has just married a
sailor —
He heard from his brother about it—
And he'll be free very soon—
After which we shall live in Plymouth at the fried-fish shop
his brother is leaving.
Sister Lizzie can say what she likes—
Just 'coz she came in unexpectedly one evening when Dad
was away—
(Folks ought to knock!)
But Jeff Sharples has spoilt her, so she's suspicious of
everybody.
I've a right to do what I like:
And he can't marry me straight-away because it would be
bigamy!

V.—Eliza Dobney.

(Fred Dobney's daughter. Age 26. Spinster. Baptist. Conservative.)

I never want to see another Visiting Minister as long as I
live:
The greedy, greasy humbugs!

They say the Labour Party is down on Parsons,
And I shall certainly give them my vote when I get one.
I don't believe Dad's any fonder of 'em than me,
Only he lives on the Baptists' trade, and daren't say nothing:
It's mother they get over—
With "Sister" here and "Sister" there,
While they help themselves to more cream,
And rave against the Vicar or the Roman Catholics.
(Mother's certain they're coming back,
And she'll be burnt alive in the market-place!)
I wish I was out of it all;
Only George is scared to death of his father
And Mr. Todd's scared to death of anything not respectable.
Nelly's affair is a great trial
And may ruin my chances altogether:
Fancy being caught in a rhubarb-bed!
Herbert should have told her to be more careful.
Jennie Smithson says the Key girl's rushing round telling everyone—
Though she's no occasion to give herself airs—
The baby-snatcher!
Something must be done about George, however;
Who's as weak as water:
If old Mr. Todd heard he'd got me into trouble, he'd consent quick enough to hide the scandal;
And we must see what can be arranged.
I dropped George a hint yesterday!

VI.—Bill Overton.

(Threshing Machine Minder. Age 36. Married Moll Oldfield. Wesleyan.)

Herbert Dobney's threatening to have the law on me:
The little skunk!
No wonder his missis couldn't stick him
And fancied a proper man:
She told me she'd never been satisfied before.
She's a fine woman, by God!
And I sha'n't promise nobody not to see her again.
If anybody tries to make me I'll tear his bloody head off!

I want her to live straight up with me same as Tom Bavin's missis;
Only she kept on about her fine relations:
Now—mebbe—she will.
Moll can stay with her mother till they nag each other to death;
Them Oldfields never stop when they're once started!
I must talk to Mr. Dring about this lawyer's letter.
Not as I'm scared of Herbert Dobney—
I doubt, though, I sha'n't get an allotment.

VII.—Archibald Townsend.

(Agricultural Seed Merchant. Age 44. Married to Enid Todd. Wesleyan. No politics.)

Running a seed business is very queer;
You look on your neighbours in such mixed ways:
Especially if you're given to thinking things over.
I was considering my father-in-law, Mr. Todd, last night,
Wondering what I really thought about him,
And after I'd written all my views on a sheet of paper I concluded I didn't rightly know.
As a customer I reverence him, as a farmer I admire him, as a thinking man I ignore him, as a Churchman I part from him, as a Tory I fight him, as an employer I detest him, as a relation-in-law I rather like him;
What do I think of him? . . .
Many things puzzle me in life.
Women are the worst of all:
When you deal with a man in the way of trade—
And you have a little difficulty over something—
You leave it to him to say what's fair—
And he always says, "We'll split the difference,"
So that everybody's satisfied!

IX.—Josef Borkman.

(Belgian Refugee. Clock-maker. Age 37. Married. Roman Catholic. Lodges with Harkers.)

Ah! these brute English!
Ill-mannered, immoral and irreligious:
They waste, they waste, they waste,
Within their homes and without,

Everywhere they waste!
Their wives cannot cook, their men cannot farm,
And enough is thrown away in their kitchens and neglected
in their fields to keep my poor Belgium for ever.
If they weren't such cold-blooded, hypocritical pigs I would
settle here and get rich quickly:
But their food!
And their clothes!!
And their Sundays!!!
I must make the best of things until the War is over—
The clock-repairing will serve my end—
And I am safe from recruiting enquiries,
Whilst Elise is putting by a fortune in London—
That wonderful city—
Where she gets more from American officers, each evening
than she took in a month at Ostend!
Banking it every morning in my name.
She will open a café when we return,
Whilst I shall have a little farm.
Would you believe it—
These drunken pigs think I ought to feel ashamed of her

X.—"Young" Lord Fitz.

(Earl's second son. Age 19. Unmarried. Church of England. Conservative. Home on leave.)

If only I could wangle another week's leave I could have
worked them both;
But as it is, I must content myself with Williamson,
And leave the Challand girl for next time.
She's a little peach;
And gave me such a look out of her eye-corner when I
asked old Rowett who she was!
He pretended, at first, he didn't know,
But I lay he did; the old rip!
I must speak to Swift about it—
A useful fellow, that—
I wish Aubrey would leave him behind,
Now he's slinking off to the States because he's got the
little Mogg girl into trouble,
And is afraid of the old man, who hates our family like
poison.

I daresay she's all right.
But how on earth any girl can stand our "Worm" is more than I can guess:
What good can he be to them?
I told Williamson I should go to her room to-night, and she only smiled;
That's what I like:
No fuss!
Her eyes are black and her legs are slim as a young colt's.

XIII.—Jesse Munks.

(Pedlar. Age 38. Bachelor. Primitive Methodist. Labour. Bob Cutts's agent for Fletton. Lodges with the Atkins.)

It's lucky my living comes from poor folks,
Or I shouldn't be able to carry on the Cause,
But even if they turn me out of this lodging
I can stay with Waddy, who isn't tied, like the Atkins.
That's the best of being a bachelor!
Waddy says them that fight for the people always must be;
You sell your soul if you marry—he says.
The news about Cutts has made a rare noise,
And I hear Luke Fletcher's torn his last wisp of hair out!
The Tories are open enemies, and bad 'uns;
But the Rads promise all and pay nothing.
We've one weak place:
If it gets out that we want the Government to take the land over
Our chance is gone!
It's a rotten policy, and I can't think why they don't drop it;
They'll have to, sooner or later,
Or they'll never hold the countryside.
What everybody wants is a bit of land for himself—
(Me, for one!)
That's why Moller Holmes is doing so well with his Union!
The other thing that scares me is the women,
Who ought to plump for Labour;
But most of them would sell their souls to have tea at the Dower House.
Look at Liz Dodds!

Nobody's fought and suffered more for the people than
old Nat,
But she'll vote for Wardle;
And I'm not sure she won't make Bob do the same;
It makes you sick!

XV.—The Countess.

(Née Fortescue. Age 59. Church of England. Conservative.)

It's time women had the vote;
Geoffrey's a fool, Eustace an ass, Aubrey a molly-coddle,
Maurice a lunatic, and Arbuthnot Wardle a noodle:
The village is worse:
Lorne and his ridiculous wife,
And their snobbish relation from the Colonies:
(Why don't they keep them!)
Berry's an atheist and a dipsomaniac,
Whilst Ferrett gives me the creeps.
America may alter Aubrey's fantastic notions,
And some pork-packer's daughter complete the cure:
She'll be vulgar enough, no doubt!
Not that we want her millions in Fletton,
Or shouldn't if we had anyone but the incompetent Eustace
for agent.
We might, of course, buy out Marshfellowton, who is
inclined to sell,
And that would nearly double our acreage here.
I'm in favour of consolidation:
We had better sell our outlying land, and be great in one
place!
The War has greatly increased our value,
And Cecil, my brother, says our income ought to be
quadrupled.
If only he could take Eustace's place, it would—
When the War restrictions are removed—
But the Cootes are not only idiots—
They are as obstinate as mules—
And Geoffrey would rather die than make any change!
You have only to look at his long upper lip!
Fitz takes after me, and is my only hope.
He would never truckle to "Labour";
But would die in the last ditch defending our ancient rights.

The Control of the Life-Cycle (ii)

By Julian Huxley

Professor Arthur Keith has recently made the interesting suggestion that the difference in racial type, as seen for instance between the white, the yellow and the black races, is due to alterations in the balance of the various glands of internal secretion. By this means, too, he seeks to explain the occasional appearance in white races of individuals of a Mongolian cast of face where no admixture of Mongolian blood can have occurred.

We shall return shortly to the question of the glands of internal secretion. Now let us for a few moments invade another field, the field of diets and food substances and their effect on growth.

As most people know by now, the established classifications of foodstuffs is into proteins, carbohydrates, fats, and mineral salts. The carbohydrates include the sugars and starches; they resemble the fats and oils in being built up out of the three elements, carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen, but differ from them in the proportions of these various elements. The proteins, on the other hand, contain nitrogen in addition to the other elements named.

As a rough analogy, the human body may be compared to the engine of a motor-car. It derives its energy from the combustion of fuel, and it utilises that energy by being constructed in a special way. To keep the engine working, you must not only supply fuel, but also repair the parts as they wear out. So, too, in the body. The carbohydrates and fats are for the most part utilised simply as energy-fuel, while repair of the tissues, which are constantly in need of a small amount of renewal, is provided for by the proteins. While the animal is growing, conditions are somewhat different, for not only must the old living machinery be repaired, but new molecules continually be laid down. Up till a very few years ago, the matter had not progressed much beyond such very general notions.

Now, however, we are beginning to know that that was far from all. To start with, all proteins are by no means equally good for maintenance (as simple repair is usually called) or for growth. Further, a wholly new class of food-factors has been discovered, without which growth and life itself cannot continue. These are the so-called vitamines.

It is as well to know at the outset that nobody yet knows what a vitamine is chemically, nobody has yet succeeded in isolating one. We know, however, what they do, and where they occur; and that is already a great deal. As usual, the matter has been approached by two convergent roads. In the first place, certain diseases were found, in the slow course of years, to be associated with deficiencies in diet. The best known of these is beri-beri, which was traced to its source through the observation of a Dutch doctor in Java. This was the chain of evidence :—(1) Beri-beri was common in the asylum under his charge. (2) The fowls in the asylum yard were fed on the patients' leavings. (3) These same fowls developed a disease very like beri-beri. (4) The patients' diet consisted very largely of polished rice.

It was eventually shown quite clearly that rice from which the husk and the germ had been removed by milling and polishing was deficient in a something which was christened vitamine, and that a long-continued diet of such rice led to the development of beri-beri. Supplying the vitamine again, in any form, leads in a wonderfully short space of time to recovery.

This side of the matter does not concern us so much. What is of interest is the fact that it takes some time for the polished rice diet to produce the symptoms of disease. In other words, a balance is gradually upset.

It is the effect of vitamines on growth that is especially interesting to us. Our knowledge of this chapter of biology we owe largely to Professor Hopkins, of Cambridge. He discovered that if a diet was made up of protein, carbohydrate, fat, and salts, all chemically pure, young animals—rats in this case—would not grow on it, although it contained ample substance both for energy and for repair. They not only would not grow, but soon lost weight, and died within a week or so. The addition of an

apparently negligible quantity of milk, however—a mere two or three cubic centimetres a day—restored the animals to health at once.

The substance lacking in the original diet was what is now generally called fat-soluble vitamine A.

Through the vitamines we are introduced to a new class of food-factors—substances which, though absolutely necessary for growth, for health, and for continued life itself, need yet be present only in infinitesimal quantities to produce their effects. That this discovery has not been without far-reaching and important results is shown by the fact that not only beri-beri, but also two other widespread diseases, scurvy and pellagra, have been shown to be caused by an analogous deficiency of diet, and to be therefore preventible; and now Dr. Mellanby, working at the Lister Institute in London, has made it more than probable that rickets, which especially interests us as being a disease of growth, is also due to the same cause. For instance, dogs fed only on separated milk, bread, and linseed oil developed all the symptoms of rickets, while those whose diet contained cod-liver oil or butter, in place of the linseed oil, grew and throve normally. Rickets (like slums) is a by-product disease of our type of civilisation. It should now be possible to wipe it out within half a century at the utmost.

Meanwhile, other workers, notably Osborne and Mendel in America, had been investigating the properties of single pure protein substances, as tested by feeding them to rats and mice, both growing and mature, as the sole protein constituents of an otherwise adequate and ample diet. The proteins are themselves very complex substances, and are built up out of a number of less complex units, each containing nitrogen, hydrogen, carbon and oxygen, and known as amino-acids. Some proteins are deficient in some amino-acids, others in others. Some of them are correspondingly able to support life for an indefinite time, others are not.

Various most suggestive facts have emerged from the investigation. To start with, it has been shown that some proteins, such as zein from maize, will not by themselves support life at all. Many others, such as edestin from hemp-seed, though capable of maintaining a growing

animal in health for a very considerable portion of its life, are yet somehow in the long run inadequate. A long period of health and growth is followed suddenly by a sharp loss of weight and premature decay, which can be arrested at once by placing the animal on a normal diet containing several proteins, but otherwise leads inevitably to death. To this upsetting of the balance we shall return.

Then we have the startling fact that certain substances will suffice to keep a grown animal in health, but will not permit of growth in a young animal. Gliadin, a protein derived from wheat kernels, of which it forms about 40 per cent. of the protein content, is such a substance. Grown rats or mice fed with this not only continue active and healthy, but are capable of reproduction. Normal young rats may be born on this diet, and will grow actively as long as they are being suckled by the mother. But if, after weaning, they are continued on the same diet, growth ceases at once. Regarded as a chemical factory—as every organism can, under one aspect, be rightly regarded—the adult rat is obviously working in a different way from the young. The young animal cannot manufacture some substance which is missing from the make-up of gliadin. But once this substance has been manufactured in sufficient quantities, and growth is over, there has somehow been introduced into the organism a new bit of chemical machinery, which is capable of so transforming the gliadin as to make the missing substance not only in amounts adequate to keep the tissues in repair, but to nourish a litter of growing young, both before and after birth. That the chemical processes going on in a growing animal are different from those in the same animal when growth is over, is clearly a fact on which there hinge immense new possibilities, alike of knowledge and of control.

This property of gliadin has been utilised to produce another and remarkable result. If a half-grown animal is fed with gliadin as its sole protein it will be able to maintain its weight, but not to add to it; it lives, but does not grow. If, however, other proteins are added to the diet, it will at once begin to grow again, and that even if the limit of the normal growth-period has been overpast. One rat was started on this late growth after 277 days of gliadin feeding and 314 days of life, and finally reached normal

size; and this in spite of the fact that growth in rats is normally over at 180 days or thereabouts. What is more, the animals kept on gliadin look as old as their size, not as old as their age in days, and are indistinguishable by inspection from young normal animals of the same weight. Obviously, we next want to know whether, when the growth of such an animal is finished, its period of maturity will be as long as that of normal animals, or if its extra period of youth must be deducted from its old age. This, however, has not yet been determined one way or the other for gliadin-fed animals. From experiments, later to be mentioned, on lower animals, we know that there is at least no theoretical reason against its maturity lasting the normal period—in other words, against its usual span of life having been actually lengthened by the amount of time during which growth was stopped. But whether this be so or not, further experiment alone can decide.

Such a prolongation of life would constitute a very real positive achievement. Otherwise, these experiments, while giving us a clear insight into the conditions of growth, may all be called negative in outcome. Addition of more vitamines, of more growth-promoting proteins beyond the limit necessary for normal growth does not result in an increase of growth. We can upset the self-regulating machinery in one direction, but not in the other.

Now let us turn to some other experiments which have achieved positive results, although this time their effect is more on differentiation than on growth. Everyone is familiar with the development of the frog—how the eggs are transformed into embryos within their jelly-membranes, how these hatch into tadpoles which are to all intents and purposes fishes, breathing by gills and swimming with their tail-fins, how these grow, how from their sides there sprout out the rudiments of limbs, and how finally a sudden change, an Ovidian metamorphosis, overtakes the organism, the body-shape and the colour alter, the tail shrivels and is absorbed into the body, the gills disappear, and the intestine, remodelling its lengthy coils into a simple loop, becomes adapted to a flesh instead of to a vegetable diet.

Development in tadpoles is a variable quantity. Food, temperature, light, and many other factors somewhat affect

the rate of growth and the time of metamorphosis. Within the last ten years, however, one factor has been found which is definite and powerful in its action; that is the amount of thyroid substance present in the animal. If tadpoles are fed on ox- or sheep-thyroid—and that is an experiment anyone can try for themselves if they go to the butcher and get him to cut away the thyroid from either side of the wind-pipe just below the larynx—they will begin to metamorphose within a week or ten days, whatever their age. Even if no leg-rudiments are present at the start, they will appear; and the other changes follow in due course.

If the animal is too small, it will attempt the transformation, but fail. There is a limit of size below which metamorphosis may be begun, but can only lead to death. However, the limit is so low that by means of thyroid, young frogs can be produced no larger than flies, and not a quarter of the bulk of those that change at the normal time.

More than this; the converse experiment has been tried, and has succeeded. Allen, in America, succeeded in removing the thyroids from young tadpoles of about a quarter of an inch in length—no mean operation! Such animals, unless they are fed with thyroid, will never metamorphose at all, never even form legs, but continue to grow and grow into giant tadpoles double and treble the size of any found in nature. Some of these have finally been found to become sexually mature; and it is hoped in the near future that young may be obtained from them.

Now there exists in Mexico and the Southern United States a remarkable creature known as the Axolotl (which, by the way, is Mexican for "play-in-the-water." It may be added that the Mexicans eat them in quantities, stewed or fried, with plenty of cayenne pepper). This creature looks like an aquatic salamander, and lives in lakes and pools, where it breathes by gills. It closely resembles the enlarged tadpole of a newt, which differs from that of a frog in early possessing legs. Another animal of about the same size is known from the same regions, the Amblystoma. This lives on land, and is definitely a large salamander, air-breathing and finless.

In the middle of last century it was discovered that these two apparently very distinct animals were really one

and the same, and that the amblystoma always started life as a little axolotl, undergoing metamorphosis later. In certain districts, however, the change never came, and the axolotls simply continued to grow and finally to become capable of reproduction in their tadpole state.

Now by means of a thyroid diet, any axolotl, no matter how large or how mature, can be turned into an amblystoma —a transformation involving not only the disappearance of gills and tail-fin, and the growth of lungs, but also an extra growth of limbs, a change of colour, and extensive alterations in the skull and skeleton.

But the last link in the chain remains. There are three or four other species of animals in America which closely resemble the axolotl, spending their piscine existence in ponds and streams, but are not known in a land-form at all. Apparently they have found aquatic existence to pay better, and in them the thyroid seems to be so reduced that they can normally never metamorphose. Biologists in the United States are now endeavouring to get hold of some of the young of these, and to see if thyroid-feeding will induce them, too, to change to a terrestrial creature. If so, it will be to a form which has been lost for thousands or tens of thousands of years, and science will have resuscitated a type of life that without her would have been for ever extinct.

These results are interesting enough in themselves, but the question remains as to *how* the thyroid accomplishes what it does. On this point, no certainty has been reached. The view I have come to may be indicated because of its bearing upon other questions. Briefly, it is this. In a developing frog the processes of growth first build up a system which we call the tadpole. Development continues, and leads, partly to the growth of this tadpole-system, but partly to the building up of a new system, the rudiments of the frog. These consist chiefly of the beginnings of lungs and limbs; but many changes in the skeleton, too, are initiated which only have meaning when looked on as forerunners of the adult state.

After a time, then, we have two systems of organs competing with each other within the single organism—the formed tadpole-system, and the forming frog-system. The action of the thyroid is, I believe, to stimulate the young,

growing frog-tissues more than the older, differentiated tadpole-tissues, or, even more probably, to over-stimulate the tadpole-tissues, and so give the frog-tissues more of a chance. When the thyroid has produced enough of its secretion, or when enough is introduced in the diet, the growth of the frog-system is so much accelerated that it beats the tadpole-system in the competition for food. The tadpole-tissues are in these conditions unable to maintain themselves, they break down, and become utilised as food-stuff by the remainder of the organism.

The underlying processes of life have often and justly been compared to an eddying stream; and this comparison will help us to visualise such a process. The structure of the organism can be represented by the bed of the stream; its vital processes by the flowing water. Alter one, and you alter the other. Imagine a stream flowing round an S-shaped bend, and in the first curve swirling under the bank in a broad eddy. If a little channel is dug across so as to short-circuit the second bend of the S, water will flow along this, and less will be left for the eddy. Anything which enlarges the channel will increase the flow along it, and as this increases, the eddy will lose its original character, and finally the whole of the second bend will dry up and cease to be. If the eddy in the bend represent the life animating the tadpole-system, the stream along the new cut that of the growing tissues of the adult, then if we have a workman with a spade coming and enlarging the new channel, he will represent the thyroid. That such struggling systems are not mere convenient imaginations chosen to suit the case is shown by numerous examples, two of which may be cited.

Clavellina, the Ascidian which we have already studied, belongs to a group of animals which, though degenerate in that they live a sedentary life, are yet of a high order of complexity, and, as a matter of fact, are degenerate offshoots of the ancestral vertebrate stock. Another of these, called Perophora, grows in a very plant-like way, sending out hollow shoots, full of circulating blood, from which at intervals new buds arise, so that a colony of individuals is produced with a common blood-system.

By snipping this shoot, or stolon, at two places, we isolate a system consisting of a single individual and a piece of

stolon. In the laboratory it is impossible to provide the creature with the minute floating food which it finds in the sea. In spite of this, such systems, if kept in pure water, live under observation for a long time. If the water is constantly renewed, the individual continues healthy, and of the same size, but the stolon progressively shrinks, because its tissues are being used up to provide nourishment for the more highly-organised individual, which in these conditions is the dominant partner.

If, on the other hand, the system is placed in extremely dilute solutions of various poisons, we can achieve a curious result. At a certain concentration, of course, the whole system is killed. At a lesser concentration, both individual and stolon are badly affected; but a still greater dilution can be found in which the more highly-organised and therefore more sensitive individual is considerably affected, the simple stolon scarcely at all. In this case the individual shrinks, it loses its typical shape and becomes an irregular sphere, its organs collapse and become simplified, as if it were about to de-differentiate; but after a time the separate cells actually migrate out of the tissues into the blood-stream (as if a house were to unbuild itself by the bricks flying out of the walls!), and finally nothing of it is left. The stolon, meanwhile, not only keeps healthy, but may actually continue to grow at the expense of all the food material thus provided. In fact, the boot is now on the other leg—the dominance is reversed.

The system thus consists very clearly of two lesser systems in competition with one another. When both are healthy, the most active and highly-organised wins; but this is more sensitive to unfavourable conditions, and, once it is affected, is unable to keep up the struggle, and is actually sucked out of existence by the other.

Growth and the reverse of growth, seen in the sudden disappearance of whole systems of organs, may thus in certain cases depend on the upsetting of a balance between contending parts of an organism.

To complete our survey, we might take one further example from a very different field—that of the mind. It is well known to those who have studied nerve-disease that one set of symptoms that occurs regularly in a certain proportion of patients suffering from shell-shock and neuras-

thenia can be classified as *mental regression*—in other words, a going backwards to an earlier stage of mental life. Grown men behave like boys of five, lisp, forget their adult life, talk as if the memories of that early time alone were active in them, play childish games, become dependent on their nurses. In fact, they become, as nearly as their grown body permits, what they were, or what they remember to have been, at some far-past age. When this condition is carefully analysed, it is found that it, too, is the result of a competition between two systems of mind—the adult system and that of earlier times, when life was remembered as happier.

In times of severe strain, to keep the adult system going involves a constant facing and overcoming of unpleasant fact. Under these conditions, its delicate adjustments are upset, its nerves become exhausted, the nervous energy will no longer flow so readily through its channels. But nervous energy is continually welling up as a product of the activities of life; and so, being refused its proper channel, it runs into that which it finds most open to it. In some, this second channel is an imaginary world; in others it is the channel that leads to despondency and suicide; in still others it is, as we have seen, the simple revivifying of the old and less complex systems of childhood.

We seem to have wandered far afield; and yet this idea of lesser systems in competition within a greater is one of extreme importance for our problem. In the sequel, we will see to what conclusions it leads us.

The administration of pituitary substance to the single-celled Paramecium led, as we saw, to increase of growth and reproduction. It has been established, too, that it encourages the growth of cancerous tumours in mice. But the results of feeding young growing animals with it have all led to a puzzling and apparently contradictory result—growth is not accelerated, but retarded. Later, however, it was discovered that this stunting is only temporary, and is followed by a later increase of growth, the final size of the animal being sometimes above the normal. This has been shown to hold good for the pituitary itself, and especially for an active substance, christened tethelin, or the growth-promoter, which Brailsford Robertson has succeeded in isolating from the pituitary.

What is more, it was found that a continued administration of tethelin not only affected growth in this way, but actually lengthened the life of the animals receiving it. The average life of Robertson's normal mice in captivity was about two years—767 days, to be precise. The average length of life for tethelin-treated mice was 100 days longer. Their life had been lengthened by over 12 per cent.

These last findings lead us naturally on to consider the duration of life and its possible prolongation. But before turning to this particular problem, I would like to bring up one other, because it so well illustrates not only the suggestiveness of our knowledge, but also reveals how great are the uncharted tracts of our ignorance.

The problem I refer to is that of cancer; cancer, which kills one woman out of every nine, one man of every thirteen; to whose perennial ravages those of the greatest wars are nothing. Of the ultimate cause of cancer we know next to nothing. It is probable that there are many such causes. Sometimes it appears to be due to local irritation, sometimes to a poison, sometimes, again, to some ultra-microscopic germ. But the end-result is always the same: some of the cells of the body become, through this or that agency, emancipated from the controlling bond which regulates the growth and harmony of the parts in the whole, and the emancipated tissue embarks upon a career of unlimited, unregulated growth and reproduction.

Let us for a moment revert to the question of growth in man or the higher animals. It should be emphasised once more how the power of growth inherent in the germ, at first enormous, decreases continuously as development proceeds.

This may be illustrated by a very simple calculation. The weight of the human germ or ovum is about $\frac{6}{10}$ths of a milligram. The weight of a new-born baby is from 3 to 4 kilograms. Thus in the nine ante-natal months the ovum increases its weight 5 or 6 million times. In the remaining 18 or 20 years of active growth, however, the child increases its weight only 15 to 20 times.

Correlated with this, we find that the power of budding and regenerating lost parts, so often seen among the lower animals, is present in the young stages of the higher types,

but not in the full-grown individuals. If one chooses to take a Planarian flatworm and simply cut it into bits, most of them will grow new heads and tails and become flatworms again, perfectly healthy though small. This is not possible in a newt, although even here amputated legs are produced afresh. In a lizard a new tail can still be grown, but not limbs, while in a bird or a mammal no large part can be regenerated; a limited regeneration still takes place, however, to the extent of healing-over cut surfaces.

But if, even in these higher types, we go back to the early stages of development, we find a much higher power of regeneration (and regeneration is of course bound up with the power of growth). A frog cannot replace an amputated limb. A tadpole can and does so with ease. Even in mammals this power is retained. Some ten years back, the zoological world was startled by the discovery of a Texan naturalist that the common armadillo of the southern United States reproduces partly by budding. Four young are always produced in a brood, and these all arise from a single original germ, which buds out the four rudiments of the future young armadillos after reaching the three-layered stage. In man himself there is no reasonable doubt that what we call identical twins—twins so nearly alike that confusion is possible between them—arise in a similar way by some form of budding from a single ovum, and that this common origin is the cause of their extraordinary resemblance.

(To be continued.)

Thus to Revisit*. . . (viii)

By Ford Madox Hueffer

The incident was symbolic. I resented the sartorial tyranny, but still more bitterly did I resent the tyranny of the intellect. It is perfectly true that humanity divides itself into the stuff to fill graveyards and the creative artists who carry forward the work of the world. But it seemed to me then, as it seems to me now, that it is difficult to be certain into which division oneself falls. So that no one man should intellectually browbeat his fellows all the time—or, indeed, ever, except in moments of heated personal controversy. And my aspiration to pass unnoticed in a crowd was intellectual far more than sartorial. I did not then care how I was dressed, and I never have cared how I was dressed, except on parades social or military. But I have always passionately desired to avoid, either in my person or my work, anything approaching what it is convenient to call a highbrow attitude.

That appears to me to be plain commonsense for the poet. His poetry must come from surrounding humanity. If he browbeats his surrounding humanity so that it sits up and, in the effort to live up to its company, behaves pompously, our poet will never see a human being. He will be like a doctor who never sees men's homes at their most sordid, or like a solicitor who is always hampered in court because his clients persist during preliminary consultations in representing themselves as suffering angels.

And even that does not exhaust the disadvantages or exactly make plain my attitude of that day which is my attitude of to-day, though I daresay my attitude of to-day is more benevolent. I mean that if I could get again into those comparatively simple, earnest, and materially self-sacrificing airs of the yet virgin 'nineties, I would very willingly do so, even if it meant wearing a slouch hat, a beard and an inverness! And I should have some peace there. Nevertheless that is a weakness of the flesh and the

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spirit. And the truth remains that, if we are to get back ever again into the main stream of literature, our attitude must be other. I mean that, just as in our persons we poets must pass in a crowd, so must our verses—our poems. Just as we must sit in drawing-rooms and railway offices as the unsuspected great, so must our poems slip into the readings of common men amongst the outpourings of the Yellow Presses and commercial fiction. Only—they must remain in the heart. That is what makes it so difficult.

Yet it is not impossible. I will wager that, if you chance to read in some vile newspaper, say Mr. Hudson's story of how the little crow-scaring boy ran over the immense down, a great way, just to gaze at the poet passing —I will wager that you will remember that to the end of your life; long after all the politics, the controversies, the lusts for blood, the *causes célèbres*—all the wilderness of apes a-chatter, has dried away as the stains of stout dry away from the mahogany surfaces of public-house bars. That is the function of poetry. But if Mr. Hudson had written with the tinny self-assertiveness of the Yellow Book division of the men of the 'nineties he would have gone, too —he would have gone just as surely from your mind as has done the incredibly smart drill sergeant, the descriptive writer of the evening paper and innumerable other "characters." That is the real proposition.

And that was the proposition that faced me thirty years or so ago—and I had to face that proposition in a very deep solitude. How very deep that solitude was comes to me in a very clear image. Mr. Galsworthy had sent me some of his poems in typescript. And I remember to this day the look of the not very well typed pages. Indeed, I remember the poems:

"The clocks are chiming in my heart
Their cobweb chime;
Old murmurings of days gone by
The sob of things a-drifting by.
The clocks are chiming in my heart!

"The stars have flickered and gone out,
Fair candles blown!"

And:

"Straw in the street!
My heart-strings hearken—
Fate strums its song of sorrow!"

And a great many incomplete stanzas, though I am sure I have never seen them in print. They gave me a great deal of pleasure. I liked the writer very much. He was writing very charming prose at the time, and I was full of hopes for his literary success. These circumstances made me overcome my natural shyness, and the next time I met the novelist I showed him some verses of mine of which I felt rather proud in an unconvinced way. They were called "The Great View," and began:

"Up here
Where the air's very clear
And the hills slope away near down to the bay,
It is very like heaven. . . ."

It ends:

"There is France. . . ."

The reader will observe that the poem must have been in rhymed *Vers Libre*, and in an ordinary, non-professional-poetic vernacular. I cannot remember any more of it, and I have not the volume at hand. It must have been written before 1898, but, since no one would print it, it did not, I think, appear until ten years later. Anyhow, it must show that by that date I had pretty well worked out my formula, which was that a poem must be compounded of observation of the every-day life that surrounded us; that it must be written in exactly the same vocabulary as that which one used for one's prose; that, if it were to be in verse, it must attack some subject that needed a slightly more marmoreal treatment than is expedient for the paragraph of a novel; that, if it were to be rhymed, the rhyme must never lead to the introduction of unnecessary thought; and, lastly, that no exigency of metre must interfere with the personal cadence of the mind or the pressure of the recorded emotion.

The recorded emotion in this particular case was that that I have always felt on seeing France—the most poignant emotion of my life; for when one sees France from the Kentish distance it is as if one saw a freedom, a lightness. . . . But I still remember the puzzled, kindly face of Mr. Galsworthy as he perused those lines. And, after a long pause, he asked why one should be excited at just seeing France. And again: Why were the lines not all of the same length? Poetry was poetry; prose was prose. What was the use of writing poetry if it did not scan? And the

point is that I found nothing to answer, because my writing of rhymed *Vers Libre* in those days was purely temperamental. I had no idea of any doctrines; those I have given above I evolved in the succeeding ten or fifteen years. I had felt their presence, and I had just written as I had felt. I have no idea of grumbling at Mr. Galsworthy. He wrote his poetry very beautifully in prose; new departures in verse were no more his affair than they were Flaubert's. And his generosity towards the work of brother artists was always sufficient.

But I think—I am certain—that that was the only one occasion in twenty years in which I even approached a discussion of new verse forms. I do not mean to say that I lacked encouragement. Mr. Conrad—as was only proper—was accustomed to inform me almost every day that I was the only English poet that he could even begin to read; and the gentleman who lately wrote to the ENGLISH REVIEW to complain that he had wasted his hospitality on my unworthy self, several times declared—again very properly—that I was the only English poet worth reading. Indeed, I remember one breakfast very clearly. This gentleman, whilst staying at my house, was making that, for me, very agreeable declaration when he stopped in the midst of a eulogistic sentence. His eye had lit upon a packet of patent breakfast food that my household of that day affected. He grasped the packet, and proceeded to declaim aloud the directions for use printed on it. And, since this gentleman has, in a printed reminiscence, ascribed to that reading the central idea of one of his most brilliant and entertaining romances, I may well write that breakfast down historic. And, indeed, the praise I have received, and the encouragement, have always seemed to me to be sufficient. Only . . . I never had any chance to talk to anyone about the technical side.

I have claimed to be the doyen of living, Anglo-Saxon writers of *Vers Libre*; and I think that I have established, in my citation of Holy Writ, that *Vers Libre* as a form has a right to exist. Let me, before returning to my main topic, say a word more as to what it is that does—or should—distinguish the *Vers Libre* of to-day from that of the Elizabethan. Let me invent, for my purposes, the adjective "mouthed." The Bible, then, and the writings of

Whitman have the appearance of poems much more mouthed than, even in the early 'nineties, I could bear. This is not a derogatory criticism; certain ages call for more of mouthing than do others, and in its genre the English Bible is perfect and unsurpassable. But that very fact rules out further excursions into that frame of mind. Whitman made those excursions, so that in his inspiration he was not sufficiently near to the ground; in his language he was much too much so. Apart from moments of two or three lines, and from one or two longer pieces of sustainedness—"When lilacs last by the doorway bloomed"—his was a vulgarised hybrid language, partly the borrowed phraseology of the Bible, partly the language of American newspaper advertisements. And it was mouthed. At any rate, it was intended to be read mouthingly, with a browbeating scowl at the poor listener.

The same atmosphere hung around Henley. He had an immensely greater verbal skill. Or perhaps that is not generous enough. Let us say that he had almost a true reverence for words and an almost absolute chastity in the use of them. But his rhythms were almost always ready made. It was less the personal cadence of his mind that he gave us than unrhymed echoes of former metricists. Indeed, you might say that it was with Henley when he gave us irregular verse hardly at all a matter of personal cadences; his irregularities are almost always strings of half- or two-third-finished blank verse lines—as you might say, supposing you to be a musician, suspended discords resolving themselves finally into the perfect chord of a blank-line verse:

> "In the waste hour
> Between to-day and yesterday
> We watched, while on my arm—
> Living flesh of her flesh, bone of her bone—
> Dabbled in sweat the sacred head
> Lay uncomplaining, still, contemptuous, strange."

This is not, of course, the intimate cadence of modern *Vers Libre*; it is on the marmoreal side of things, tending towards the Elizabethan. But it shows, just as my own verse of the day shows, that this great and upstanding influence on the new day that tried in the 'nineties to dawn had felt the pressure of boredom caused by the loosely written, slowly monotonous, and generally decasyllabic

verse of his immediate predecessors. His immediate predecessors would, in fact, have written:

> "In the waste, dragging stagnant, silent hour
> Between to-day's dawn and dead yesterday
> We watched whilst on my straining, pitiful arm
> . . . . .
> Dabbled in sweat the sacred, thorn-crowned head."
> . . . . . .

Henley's verse is a protest against this intolerable tyranny of dullness.

And there were other protests. I suppose that, next to Henley's, the most lasting and devoted influence on the better literature of the last quarter century has been that of Mr. Edward Garnett. And we do not have far to look amongst Mr. Garnett's creative work before we come upon his prose-poems. The Prose-Poem was a form much affected in the early 'nineties. You find it in Fiona Macleod, in the works of Stephen Crane, and in many unexpected places. I daresay that even the Things Seen that Mr. Charles Lewis Hind made fashionable were less consciously rhythmical attempts at finding a short form slightly more memorable and crystallised than ordinary novel or short story paragraphs. The Prose-Poem was more elaborated, more self-consciously poetic in atmosphere, more inclined towards fine writing. Nevertheless, I think I shall not be doing Mr. Garnett an injustice if I say that his prose-poems were, too, a Celtic protest against the tautological dullness of his decasyllabic predecessors.

For myself, after a youth rather tortured by the process of being trained for a genius, I was singularly sensitive to these pressures. I will ask the Reader not to believe that I or any of the writers of modern *Vers Libre* are incapable of writing correct verse. Henley undoubtedly could and did. And, for myself, I will cheerfully undertake to write any number of sonnets, Petrarchan or otherwise, at the time-rate of five minutes per sonnet—or two minutes if the rhymes are given. Nay, more, I will undertake to bring at any moment, twenty unselected men from a golf-club or an officers' mess, who, given half a day's tuition, will write sonnets just as fast. The Reader has only to consider how easy fifth-form schoolboys find it to write perfectly correct Latin verse to realise that to write perfectly correct verse in one's own language is so easy a matter that it is hardly

worth comment. But to express an individuality in any medium is another matter; yet that was the quite modest task that I set myself in the early 'nineties. And the task appeared to me to be simply a matter of getting down to one's least rhetorical form of mind, and expressing that. In the end, that seemed to me to be a matter of self-forgetfulness.

The trouble—for me, if not for themselves—with nearly all poets was nearly always that, at any rate, the moment they took pen in hand, they were totally unable to forget that they were professionals, if I may so put it. For myself I simply tried to get at myself in an absolutely unpoetic frame of mind; I have always tried to get at that; I hope so to continue. If I have any value to the world it is simply the value of my unaffected self—and I daresay that any man's value in this world is simply that. For no man's views are worth very much; the facts that any man can collect during his short pilgrimage through life are ludicrously or pitifully few, and the only empire over which we can for certain reign, or for which we can assuredly speak, is the heart of man. And one's own heart is the heart that one knows best!

I don't mean to say that there is no room in the world for rhetorical expression; rhetorical expression means, as a rule, the expressions of a man's emotions as he would like to feel them—or as he would like the world to believe that he feels them. There is plenty of room for that, and the room has been well filled. But of gentle, unaffected, and intimate expression there has been very little. And the difficulty is simply that of getting down to oneself—but that is a very great one. For it is hard for a man to say that the writing of himself small is his job, and not that he must swell himself, as if pneumatically, until for a time at least he shall cast on some stage or other a shadow as large as that of the Colossus of Rhodes. Yet, having as a boy seen many such colossi, I had no other ambition than that of avoiding the colossus expression. I tried to imagine myself keeping up a little, intimate warble amongst the hurricanes and the detonations. I remember writing a poem twenty-five years ago as a preface to some volume or other. It was never printed, because Mr. Garnett said it was not poetry, and I daresay it was not. But it ended:

"Like poor Dan Robin, thankful for your crumb
Whilst larger birds sing mortal loud, like swearing,
When the wind lulls I try to get a hearing."

And that seems to sum the matter up. Later, I arrived at the definite theory that what I was trying to attain to was verse that was like one's intimate conversation with someone one loved very much. One would try to render what one was like when, on a long winter's night before the fire, one talked, and just talked. No doubt, when one talks to someone one likes very much, one renders oneself, sometimes, a shade more virtuous or more picturesque than one actually is. But then, if the person to whom you are talking loves you very much, or knows you very well, they will know you for the odd creature that you are. And one would be inhuman if one could talk of oneself as dispassionately as, let us say, an editor of the *New Statesman.*

Having then, as it were, established the tone, let us go on to the question of cadence for intimate verse. . . We are attempting to establish some sort of formula for the revelation of intimacies; for the revelation, the rendering, not the recording. What, then, is the most intimate, the most revelatory attribute, of the men with whom we do our daily businesses? Supposing you, a short, stout man, desire to personate for the amusement of your friends a tall, thin lady, how do you set about it? You imitate the tones of her voice if you can get your voice anywhere near hers. If you cannot, you reproduce her vocabulary, the turns of phrase that she most characteristically uses—and the cadences of her sentences.

The writer of intimate verse cannot render tones of voice, the rest he can and must. That is to say that, supposing the poet accept as his my ambition and desires that his verse shall exhibit him as he really is, whether he be merely talking to a friend, flying in an aeroplane, or indulging in any intermediary activities—the poet then must seek to reproduce his actual vocabulary, his own characteristic turns of phrase, the exact cadence of his own usual sentences. The result will be himself.

That will be no easy task. Let the Reader try to write merely a short note to a tradesman, and he will find that the phraseology he employs is that of dead and gone generations of notewriters. Let him go a little further, and try to

write an exposition of some moral truth, or an account of some mental adventure, and he will find, after he has written it, that he has employed phrases fom Addison's *Spectator*, cadences from Doctor Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*, and the vocabulary, again let us say, of one of the editors of almost any dignified journal of to-day. There will be nothing of the writer's self.

That, then, is the case of *Vers Libre* as it has presented itself to me during a matter of thirty years. I may as well add a note or two as to rhyme. I have personally used rhyme very frequently, firstly because I like rhyme and vowel-colourings in verse, and secondly because rhyme seems to me to have the effect of hastening verse along. I once wrote an immensely long poem in unrhymed *Vers Libre*—and it seemed immensely long and intolerably wearisome. I went through it again a month or so later, and added rhymes to practically all the lines. It at once seemed much shorter and not so wearisome. As for adding rhymes, there is no difficulty about that if you really have a command of the language, if you really take your rhymes by the throat and do not let them mislead you into digressions.

Having, then, brought myself, as it were, up to about the year 1919, I then found awaiting me the group of *Les Jeunes*. For it was as if I had been mining underground for a long while and, coming to the surface, intruded on a tea-party, with the table all laid in the sunlight and air. I do not in the least mean to say that I had exercised any influence on these formidable young people before that date. My labours had been conducted mutely and in a decent obscurity. But, starting later, they had arrived at just my point. Indeed, you may say that my relation to them was exactly that of my grandfather to the Pre-Raphaelite brethren. He had worked in solitude, and for many years before they came to him, having evolved doctrines that he had never publicly, and only half privately, considered or formulated. That, I take it, is how I came to find myself in Imagiste Anthologies, in *Blast*, and in many other places from which the public Press constantly warned me, my sense of dignity should have kept me.

England and America

By Storm Jameson

Unrestricted Competition

UNRESTRICTED competition between the great trading Powers of the world means war. That is the thesis. The proof is capable of logical exposition. The event follows the cause. Man, however, is the master of the event in so far as he can step in between the cause and the event and by removing or reversing the cause, change the event. Caught in the relentless logic of economic laws, he can at any moment free himself by an effort of will. He can also refrain from freeing himself.

Let us examine the logical outcome of unrestricted competition between England and America.

We do not need the heaping up of statistics to show that America, given a reasonably satisfied Labour world, will become progressively more formidable as an exporting nation. She was being driven into this position before the war by the operation of capital laws. The accumulation of credit (purchasing power) in a few hands was forcing that credit to find in overseas trade the outlet it was denied at home, because the home population was not in possession of sufficient purchasing power to absorb a proper share of all that the accumulated credit of a few enabled them to make. This tendency has received a powerful impulse through the war. The indebtedness of Europe to America makes an increased output from Europe to America inevitable. American goods must therefore be exported to offset the imports. Further than this, they cannot be exported to Europe in overwhelming quantities, because of Europe's inability to buy. They will therefore be deflected in increasing quantity to the other markets of the world, and come here into competition with Great Britain, whose own home population is increasingly *less* able to absorb its surplus manufactures.

The obstacles in the way of America's expansion of her foreign trade—her inexperience and the indifference of her

people to foreign investment—will become increasingly negligible.

The capacity of America for an enormous export trade is beyond doubt. With the development of her natural resources and the maximum use of her labour resources she will—within measurable time—be able to supply the world. She is not averse from making the attempt. Her trade papers are monotonous records of expansion in mill and factory.

"The Riverside and Dan River Cotton Mills will invest $2,500,000 for construction of additions to their plant." "Hamilton Carhartt Cotton Mills will add 10,000 additional spindles." New textile factories are growing up all over the cotton-growing States. Oregon, which has a soil and a climate similar to Holland, is preparing to develop her flax. American ship-building is being subjected to the speeding-up process with undeniable results. The United States produces more than half the pig iron output of the world. The Latin-American coal trade has largely passed into American hands. Her steel manufacturers will shortly be able to undersell ours in English markets. The United States is the pioneer of oil-burning shipping services, and is establishing a world-circuit of supply stations for her ships. It is, however, doubtful whether America will ever be the greatest carrying nation of the world, in view of the high capital cost and higher running cost of her mercantile marine.

These things are significant as indications of America's inevitable expansion of foreign trade—an expansion which, it cannot be too often emphasised, is assisted by the passion of her people for competition. They are not to be taken as proof of Great Britain's inability to compete with America on her own ground. The manufacturers of Great Britain have no doubt of our ability. America is one of the most wasteful nations in the world. Her virgin fertility, timber, coal, oil, iron, etc., have been exploited with irresponsible prodigality.* More important

* It has been estimated that her anthracite coal will be exhausted in fifty years, and her bituminous in a hundred. The best and second best supplies of iron will be exhausted before the anthracite. Mineral oil will not last so long. On the other hand the oil resources of Mexico are hardly scratched, and there is no reason to suppose that America will continue to waste like a fool because she has been endowed like a god.

than this, the natural resources of the British Commonwealth are quite equal to those of America.

It follows, therefore, that, viewed externally, the struggle between Great Britain and America would appear to be a contest between fairly evenly-matched antagonists. The weight of British experience is balanced by American freshness and enthusiasm—an enthusiasm absent in our population. Just at present the money rates on current business in London are below those in America. Manufacturers or shippers in Great Britain can discount their paper in London at lower figures than those obtainable by American shippers. They can, therefore, in many lines offer better terms to foreign buyers than the American can. America, on the other hand, has an advantage in being able to promise quick delivery. The struggle will not at first be uneven. And it will be fought out in the largely unexploited markets of the East. The tremendous productive capacity and low standard of life in the East was attracting capital from the West before the war. Manufacturers were using their surplus profits to put down plant in the Eastern world, exploiting its cheap labour, and using the products in competition with more expensively-produced Western commodities. America and Great Britain have not the field to themselves; Japan is an increasingly formidable antagonist in foreign markets, and has in China a country of untapped resources. Germany will come back into foreign markets with inevitable strides. The reorganisation of the Foreign Trade Control Board of the German Foreign Office is already well advanced.

We have then, at least, two great Powers—America and Great Britain—each increasingly able of supplying the world and each competing for the world's trade. The definite allocation of markets to one or other by arrangement—international trusts—is the only way of escape possible so long as the present social order maintains itself. It is a dubious way, and every present indication points to its having only a very partial success, in spite of the natural tendency of capital to combine internationally. *America does not feel any necessity for coming to terms.*

The situation is not so simple even as this. To return for a moment to elementary economics. In theory, an industrial country exports that which it does not need—its

surplus manufacture—and imports that which it needs and cannot grow or manufacture. In capitalistic practice, a country exports that which its home market does not absorb because it cannot afford to do so, and it imports the raw materials required for further manufacture for export, and the luxuries demanded by the class into whose pockets goes the bulk of the profits of production. The result of this procedure is, first, an ever-increasing surplus for export, and, secondly, an ever-shrinking market at home, as the purchasing power of the lower and middle classes suffers by the inflation of credit based on an inflated export trade. At the same time, the price of necessities rises with the decrease in their production, consequent on the decrease in purchasing power of the necessity-buying classes, and on the increase in the production and import of luxuries.

We can see, therefore, a double tendency—to an inflated export trade and to deflated home markets. The inter-action of these tendencies aggravates both.

It is possible to approach the same conclusion by another route. In every manufacturing country in the world, politicians and capitalists—and Labour leaders—are clamouring for increased production. At the same time, the cost of living is rising in these countries, *and was rising before the war, concurrently with increased production and increasing facility of production.* This is due to the fact that the profits of increased production are not adequately distributed. They accumulate and form the basis of credit extension to a class which uses this credit to promote further trade expansion—not expansion in the home market; the purchasing power of the home market has already been depreciated by the mere existence of this credit extension and by the manufacture of luxuries for its pleasure—but expansion abroad, and consequent further credit inflation and a further depreciation of purchasing power in the home market. Accumulated credit is also constantly being employed in the industrialisation of countries previously purely or mainly producers of foodstuffs and raw materials. This process is going on in every manufacturing country in the world. Japan is in an acute stage of trouble caused by its preliminary stages. At the same time, therefore, that increased production is being urged, the home markets of these countries are able to absorb less and less of this

increase, which then becomes available for export. In the present period of deflated stocks the pressure of this surplus is not everywhere acute. It will become so with astonishing rapidity as the world's wheels continue to turn. At the same time the parallel process of increased production of luxuries goes merrily on. Houses are not built, but cinemas are.

It is a far cry to the time when all the world's markets are congested with the surplus goods of madly-producing countries; the danger lies along the route. Long before that time one of two things will have happened. Either there will be a war for cheap raw material centres to offset the fall in profits due to the increasing fierceness of competition in the existing markets. Or the lower and middle classes will break the vicious circle of inflated credit, an inflated export trade, high prices of necessaries, a depreciated purchasing power for themselves, less production for their needs and still higher prices of necessaries. They may break it violently—Bolshevism. Or they may find a better way.

There is, on the basis of unequal distribution of purchasing power and increased production, no other event possible. If nothing happens to upset or reverse the working of the present system, we in Great Britain shall find ourselves committed to a struggle for raw materials centres and markets against one or two Powers of equal producing capacity with our own, of which the end is war or revolution.

We, on our hand, are utterly weary of unregulated competition, and America is equipped for it by a genius for mass production and a real love of the competition game.

The very catastrophic nature of the event makes it seem impossible but that it will be averted. It will not be averted by the financial and manufacturing interests of the world. The capitalists of one country cannot by themselves limit production for export and maintain their profits. Neither will they expand the home market by distributing their profits. And was not the Great War once impossible in our imagination?

There are—in the immediate future—two necessary adjuncts to the unrestricted competition game. Great Britain must dominate Russia and the oil-bearing countries of Europe and America must have Mexico. We have already, to please the Churchills of Europe, wasted a deal

of men and money in trying to destroy Russia's chance of becoming a commercial proposition. The attempt failed. as the mad and wicked adventure of Pilsudski failed. The total result of it was to weaken further a Russia bled white by war and revolution, and to push still further into the future that economic re-establishment of Russia which is essential to Europe's recovery. Commercially speaking, we backed the wrong horse. That which we attempted to gain by force we could have gained with infinitely greater hope of success by offering Russia food and medical supplies and credit. Lenin is no fool. He knows enough about credit to destroy entirely the capital structure of credit in Russia by the simplest means. His ideals are compatible with the introduction into Russia of the Taylor efficiency methods. If he is sincere as well as capable, he intends to restore Russian credit, but not to allow it to accumulate in the hands of a few men for their exclusive benefit, and for the artificial inflation of an export trade. It is not to be supposed, however, that he would at any time have refused to deal with the holders of credit in Great Britain because those holders are not the whole people. Our manufacturers would have done better to do business with him, and not at the point of the sword.

The wealth of Russia is largely undeveloped, notwithstanding the rush of capital into the country during the last years of the 19th century. Russia's timber resources are immeasurable. She has 50 per cent. of the world's resources of iron ore, 97 per cent. of the world's platinum, more manganese than any other country, 40 per cent. of the world's fur supplies, and agricultural possibilities of unsurpassed wealth. In 1910-13, working by antiquated and comparatively unproductive methods, Russia produced 79 per cent. of the world's flax, 67 per cent. of its rye, 54 per cent. of its hemp, 29 per cent. of its oats, 25 per cent. of its wheat, and 14 per cent. of its sugar. Her metallurgic resources are still largely untouched. Nearly 95 per cent. of her land area is not cultivated at all. War, revolution and blockade have turned what was mere backwardness into chaos, not only by cutting off from Russia all supplies and stores but by diverting her resources from economic reorganisation to a defensive war. What incredible folly!

From this cursory consideration of Russia's wealth it is

sufficiently obvious that the country which first establishes a working commercial relationship with Russia—assisting to develop her marvellous resources in exchange for concessions—has secured a trade ally of incalculable value. Great Britain, entering upon a—strictly friendly—competitive race with the United States, cannot afford to miss the chance. Europe, moreover, cannot afford a ruined Russia. Is it credible that Germany should be permitted to develop Russia for Europe's good?

A complication of a peculiar nature arises from Japan's attitude to Siberia. Siberia's timber and mineral wealth is enormous. Official Japanese opinion on the question of Japanese intervention in Siberia varies from the ultra-Imperialistic desire to have "the opportunity of exploiting the gold deposits so abundant in that country and of developing the timber resources and the industries, in co-operation with the Russian population" (Dr. Tomidziu in the Japanese newspaper *Kokumin*), to the opinion that any attempt on the part of Japan to develop a separatist policy in Siberia is doomed to failure, since Siberia's political and economic development is unalienably bound up with that of Russia as a whole. The motives of Imperialistic Japan are of the purest. Naturally. "The sole end towards which we are striving is the suppression of the Bolsheviki in the name, and in support of anti-Bolshevism. . . . If the anti-Bolshevist elements succeed to power and leadership in European Russia, then it is to the interest of Japan to establish friendly relations with them, to help them in the rehabilitation of new Russia, and, moreover, to enter again into intimate relations with Germany with the purpose of clearing the way for a triple alliance between Japan, Russia and Germany" (*Kokumin*). This is too *naïve* to be true. Except on the supposition that Japan believes America so abjectly apprehensive of a "Red" wave from Eastern Siberia as to be prepared to give Japan anything to oppose a barrier between America and a Bolshevik-infected Russia. Which ought to be absurd. The attitude of Great Britain to Japanese Imperial ambitions will be dependent upon her Russian policy as a whole. The necessities of the unrestricted competition game might dictate a commercial understanding with Japan. America can, after all, be trusted to look after Japan. A British

understanding with that ingenious race would be none the less satisfactory—British Big Business would not sleep less easy o' nights—for the thought of an American policeman on the other side of the Pacific. And doing his policing for sheer love of the job!

If Mexico had not been the richest oil country in the world she would have had a more peaceful life. Her oil wealth, even now enormously greater than that of any other oil-bearing centre in the world, is still largely undeveloped. Her metallurgic resources (copper, silver and gold) are immensely valuable, and her industrial possibilities are very great. For some years there has been a powerful movement on foot for "intervention" in Mexico. It is unlikely that the British oil interests in that country are averse to it. The American interests stand to gain, as the reward of intervention, Mexico's still undeveloped oil wealth, and security for their present share in the annual yield.* The American Press has fed the public with tales of Mexican outrage on life and property. Carranza's Government, hampered by a lack of munitions—delivered readily to Villa, the brigand—received no credit for its actual achievements, currency restoration, trade and transport recovery, and social progress among the lower classes, but unsparing blame for its shortcomings. The American need for oil is greater than that of any other country in the world. Prospectors of several nationalities have been searching the South American Republics for oil, but Americans predominate. With the possible exception of Venezuela, the known oil deposits of South America are not comparable with those of Mexico.†

If the United States are prepared to face the certainty of hostile criticism from the rest of the Latin-American States, and to "clean up" Mexico, "regardless of expense," they will have gained the opportunity to exploit the

* In 1918 the petroleum yield of Mexico was divided as follows:—America, 72.7 per cent.; Britain, 26.5 per cent.; Holland, 6 per cent., combined Spanish-Mexican, 2 per cent.

† It is a curious comment upon this need that some members of the American Commission, headed by Major-General J. G. Harboard, which has been investigating Near East conditions, are reported to have expressed the opinion "that the United States should not accept the mandate over Turkey, but in case of its acceptance, control should be exercised as far the Caucasus." (*New York World*, October 20th, 1919.) That is to say, as far as the oil-fields of Baku.

richest oil-fields in the world. And what will they have lost but the right to criticise the English policy in Persia or the Japanese policy in Korea? An intangible loss and a tangible gain. If capitalistic enterprise is left to make the choice, it is not in doubt.

A world given over to unrestricted competition between the big producing powers will be a world in which certain characteristics, already more or less apparent, will be gradually developed. The level of prices will rise steadily in spite of attempts to reduce it. Wages and salaries will become increasingly inadequate, the salaried workers having now definitely entered upon the futile course of trying to force up salaries in pursuit of prices. The inflation of credit, on the basis of an inflated export trade, will assist the inflation of prices and further discourage the production of necessities—already discouraged by the depreciation of purchasing power in the lower and middle classes. Financial and trading intrigues for the possession of spheres of exploitation will become increasingly bitter, until the strained bonds of international peace snap at some point—possibly in the Pacific, certainly in the East. Unless, of course, the breaking point comes first, at home, in the non-credit-owning classes.

The History of Lordly Beamshifter

By Louis Golding

Lordly Beamshifter was going down. He had been indisputably the most brilliant man of his epoch at Oxford. He had argued with Deans of Theology, and at will had converted them to Atheism or Manicheeism. He had argued with first-term undergraduates on Aubrey Beardsley, and forced them into a hero-worship of Marcus Stone. And Beamshifter was going down.

He lay upon his ottoman curling vorticist rings of smoke. "What shall I be?" Beamshifter murmured lazily. "What power or principality is suited to my talents?" His eye-lashes flickered speculatively. "No!" he determined, "I shall not be a politician! Mr. Gladstone was a politician!" A millionaire? His mind hovered. . . . But how little effort that would require! Moreover, he insisted on a certain patrician decorum in the disposition of destinies. How could he consent to be a millionaire when he had not laid the orthodox foundation by selling newspapers at the age of seven and studying radio-activity with the proceeds. He would not be a millionaire.

A thought came to him. The thin lips tightened. He composed the Roger Fry cushions below his head. He placed the thought before him like a crystal of bright glass suspended in air. Slowly it rotated upon axis after axis until each of its facets had been presented. He arrested at length the crystal from its rotations. The room was stark with cold light.

"I shall be a poet!" said Lordly Beamshifter. Said Lordly Beamshifter, "I shall be a great poet!" Mr. Beamshifter had hitherto achieved poetry, you ask? Not a couplet! Hence the very pride and austerity of this

determination. "I shall be," said Beamshifter quietly, "the greatest poet of this age!" Here were no vulgar acclamations such as surged uncleanly round a statesman's feet, here no facile splendour of the millionaire. The very flesh of the greatest poet of his age would be a mystery, a shrine. His word would be potent and aloof as a less democratic sunlight, a wind which should not fan the mere foreheads of the herd. "How then," asked Beamshifter, "shall I be the greatest poet of the age?" He pondered. "I must remove," he determined, "all possible claimants from poetry's arena!" A removal by physical annihilation would be arduous and unsatisfactory. Speculative smoke-rings thinned towards the inane.

He leapt from his ottoman. "They shall be parodied!" he declared, "they shall be parodied, and they shall die!"

Lordly Beamshifter took a bed-sitting-room in Bloomsbury. For three months the world knew him not. In four months the world knew him well. His book of Parodies burst into the skies of Poetry like a calamitous star. Billings, who had made a large reputation out of the greenness of grass, was aped so diabolically that he bought a lawn-mower and worked by the hour in Surbiton. Barstairs, who had written narrative poems, was narrated into obloquy. The exquisite Shuffleswain, whose poetry had been the whisper of green dusk and the glint of early stars, was compelled to seek co-optation on the Streatham Board of Scavengers. Young Jim Sickles was frosted in the time of his budding, and retired to read Maria Theresa in the British Museum. Beamshifter lifted his inviolable forehead over the subdued amphitheatre of poetry. His antagonists were flown or dead.

"I must now," said Beamshifter, with no faint flush of triumph coarsening the marble of his cheeks, "write Poetry!"

Beamshifter repaired once more to his bed-sitting-room. "Flowers?" he asked. "Breasts? Nenuphars? Parrokeets? No, *c'est trop vieux jeu!*" He threw an intent eye round his bed-sitting-room. It came to rest upon his sofa. "A great poet must not cut himself wholly adrift from all tradition! Only Cowper shall have been my forerunner!"

After a month's labour "The Armchair" was given to the world. "What shall we say about it?" whispered the pale critics to each other over Bass and cheese sandwiches. "It is unequal but autochthonous," one suggested hazily. "It is sustained but alien," dimly suggested another. "This will never do!" said a third. "He will write a Parody on Critics!" There was a startled and stifled shriek. "Yes, he will parodise *us*!" The critics wrung their hands in apprehension. "What shall we do?" they moaned.

"We are agreed, then," a voice said evenly, "that 'The Armchair' is at once autochthonous and sustained!" "Autochthonous and sustained!" echoed the critics. "Sustained and autochthonous!" echoed the walls in phantasmal antiphony.

"The Armchair" sold five editions in four weeks. The devotees of Beamshifter in Golder's Green determined that henceforth it was irreverent to sit on Armchairs. A new antimacassar cult invaded Kensington, with special reference to Armchairs. An exhibition of Armchairs was held in Burlington House. Professor Yumpeltick of Yale wrote a monograph in three volumes illustrative of the genesis and nature of Armchairs. At Buckingham Palace . . . I need say no more.

"My poem," murmured Beamshifter, "is being damned with faint prose. I admit I am autochthonous, but my universality is being disregarded. My flight, demonstrably, is sustained, but they have not computed the height of my ascent. Moreover . . ." he turned down the jets of his gas-stove, "I am not merely the greatest poet of my time. I am the greatest critic!" His head turned frigidly on the vertebræ of his neck. "Am I not?" he inquired icily. The gas-stove purred timid assent.

It would be unseemly, he admitted, for the only adequate appreciation of Beamshifter to appear over his own initials in "The Loud Noise," the journal whose editorial chair he had lately deigned to occupy. The appreciation of "The Armchair" by K. K. Kurtis in the pages of "The Loud Noise" was the fine flower of criticism during that decade.

"The Hearthrug" followed "The Armchair," and "The Kettle-Holder" consummated his primacy of poetry.

The only critic in Fleet Street who could soar to the peaks of their argument was K. K. Kurtis. The balanced enthusiasm of Kurtis was tempered by a spirit of precise criticism. In lines 945-6 of "The Toothbrush," he pointed out the rhyming of "jaws" with "wars." He reproved the eccentricities of the poet's punctuation. He suggested that the inspiration had been cramped by undue brevity.

The summit of Beamshifter's genius was at last attained with "The Kitchen-sink," a poem in twelve cantos. The Anthology of Contemporary Poetry for the lustrum signalised by "The Kitchen-sink" found that it was wholly unseemly to enclose the work of any other writer soever within the same covers as "The Kitchen-sink." It was produced, accordingly, with fifty blank pages before and fifty blank pages after the Masterpiece Itself.

When Lordly Beamshifter died at length, K. K. Kurtis, it was rumoured, found the world of letters a desert so Saharan that he turned broken-hearted from the practice of criticism. Some declare he bought up a large boarding-house on the Swanage front, others that he committed suicide. It is certain that K. K. Kurtis did not long survive the great poet whose virtues he had so masterfully analysed.

The Influence of Mr. James Joyce

By Richard Aldington

" La vie n'est de soy ny bien ny mal; c'est la place du bien et du mal, selon que vous la leur faictes."—MONTAIGNE.

I

OBVIOUSLY no valid criticism can be made of Mr. Joyce's *Ulysses* until the whole work has been published in book form. It seems to me that the serial publication has lasted an abnormally long time, and that there is some excuse for my impatience in speaking of *Ulysses* while it is still fragmentary. Mr. Joyce's attempt is most interesting both for its achievement and for the influence it must have; the achievement, I am convinced, is remarkable, its influence, I fear, may be deplorable. If young writers could be persuaded to applaud and honour Mr. Joyce without copying him, all would be well; but such a thing is unlikely. It is part of the charm of youth that it wishes to resemble those it admires; but who can feel anything but perturbed at the idea of a whole crop of pseudo-Joyce prose writers? From the manner of Mr. Joyce to Dadaisme is but a step, and from Dadaisme to imbecility is hardly that. Where Mr. Joyce has succeeded, with occasional lapses, others must fail, lacking his intellectuality, his amazing observation, memory and intuition, his control over the processes of his art.

Mr. Joyce is a modern Naturaliste, possessing a greater knowledge of intimate psychology, but without the Naturaliste preoccupation with *l'écriture artiste*. He is less conscious, more intuitive than the Naturalistes; if the expression is not too strained, he has made realism mystic. *Dubliners*, influenced by French writers, was a book to which Zola would have given his *nihil obstat*. It was neither better nor worse than a great many French

Naturaliste books; the stories in *Dubliners* were very nearly the sort of thing that Octave Mirbeau has written. The book attracted attention for the reason that Naturalisme was a literary mode little practised by writers of English fiction who were also artists. I have no doubt that quantities of so-called realistic novels have been published in England and America in the last thirty years, but the true Naturaliste genre has been rarely exploited with success. I suppose Gissing was an English Naturaliste. Neither James nor Mr. George Moore nor Mr. Conrad is a Naturaliste in the sense that Mirbeau, Hennique, Zola, the earlier Huysmans and even the Goncourts (in *La Fille Elisa* and *Germinie Lacerteux*) were Naturalistes. *Dubliners* was plainly related to these French novels. The object of the Naturalistes was to produce a "slice of life," preferably as sordid and as repulsive as possible. Thus *La Fille Elisa* (E. de Goncourt) is the wretched life-story of a criminal prostitute; *Contes de la Chaumière* (Mirbeau) are sketches of peasant life where every character is depraved, vicious and ugly; *A Vau l'Eau* (Huysmans) is the history of a bilious government clerk who spends his life trying to purchase a decent meal in Paris, and, of course, without success. The "philosophy" of the Naturalistes was sombre and derisive; they were exceedingly pessimistic; they held that life is a most wretched experience, that happiness is impossible and mankind destitute of virtue. They divided men into the poor and the rich. The poor endured lives of desolating banality, poisoned with bad alcohol and worse food, brutalised by excessive labour, stunted by poverty, devastated by the passions of greed, hatred, and lust, which last almost invariably gave them venereal disease. The rich dragged out a bored existence in crass and stupid luxury, agitated by much the same passions, equally unhappy and almost equally diseased. If the characters of a Naturaliste novel were in the country, it was invariably winter or else perpetually raining (as in Swinburne's depressed *Ballade of Burdens*) if they lived in towns they were pursued by evil smells, smoke and bad air and frequently contracted tuberculosis. All this was "rendered" with extraordinary talent and verve; the style of men like Edmond de Goncourt is original and exquisite,

and who needs to be reminded of the beautiful clarity of Maupassant's prose?

Dubliners was an excellent example of the Naturaliste method in English fiction. It was written carefully and in fine precise prose; the characters were nearly all inhabitants of the worst Dublin slums and their lives were unfortunate, dismal, and usually depraved. It was objective, according to the Naturaliste method. The writer "presented" his characters without comment; he did not reflect or moralise. But in *Dubliners*, as in the writings of French Naturalistes, a didactic purpose was plain, all protests to the contrary. This purpose was to show that life for the majority of human beings is more or less disgusting, that the deepest passions are perverted and debased by the conditions imposed by society, that men are selfish, beastly, domineering when they have power, cringing when they are weak, above all, that men and women are singularly nasty when moved by sexual emotions. Perhaps I put it a little strongly, but that is my impression on re-reading the French Naturalistes, and it coincides with my memory of *Dubliners*. After *Dubliners* Mr. Joyce issued the *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. This was at once an original achievement and a departure from conventional Naturaliste methods. It was autobiographical and not objective. It was the life-story of Stephen Daedalus who, to use the writer's own words, was "a sensitive nature smarting under the lashes of an undivined and squalid way of life." This book, issued unpretentiously and in the midst of the war, caused considerable discussion, and aroused enthusiasm in men of letters "open" to new impressions and admirations. The *Portrait* was certainly "squalid," but it had magnificent qualities. No such pitiless and close analysis of adolescence has been written in recent years; the numerous other autobiographical novels seemed mere egotistic self-glorification beside it. Moreover, the observation of character, remarkable enough in *Dubliners*, was here triumphant and masterly. Stephen at home, Stephen at school, Stephen growing up in the agonies of adolescence, Stephen in his relations with other young men and girls, was portrayed with skill and insight. Those who pretended not to admire the book must have been very dull or very malignant.

Undoubtedly the "triumph" of large sales and the admiration of silly women were not forthcoming, but Mr. Joyce had the admiration and respect of almost all his contemporaries and many of his elders. His next book was awaited with great interest. This proved to be *Ulysses*.

II

Consider for a moment Mr. Joyce's position in the interval between *The Portrait* and *Ulysses*. He appeared to have outgrown the immature Naturalisme of *Dubliners* and had certainly improved immensely as a writer of fiction. True, *The Portrait* was sordid, but it had fine passages; the contest between the "idealism" of Daedalus and the outer world of crass stupidity and ugliness was very moving. The spiritual conflict lifted the story out of squalor into tragedy, though there was a lingering over unsavoury details which spoiled the balance of the book. It was nasty in many spots, but with a kind of tonic nastiness. One felt that here was a man of extreme sensitiveness and talent getting rid of "perilous stuff," throwing off the evil dreams and influences of mawkish youth to reach a saner, clearer view of human life. Many people must have had great hopes of Mr. Joyce. I did not for one moment desire him to accept a particle of that official optimism which is so poisonous; I did not want him to be "sugary," or to affect a Renanesque benevolence and calm which were obviously foreign to his character. But I did hope to see him write real tragedy, and not return to the bastard genre of the Naturalistes who mingle satire and tragedy, and produce something wholly false; I hoped to see his characters emerge into a clearer air from the sordid arena in which they were subdued by Fate in a débris of decayed vegetables and putrid exhalations.

Clearly I hoped the wrong thing. *Ulysses* is more bitter, more sordid, more ferociously satirical than anything Mr. Joyce has yet written. It is a tremendous libel on humanity which I at least am not clever enough to refute, but which I am convinced is a libel. There is laughter in *Ulysses*, but it is a harsh, sneering kind, very different from the *gros rire* of Rabelais. I see that Mr. Pound, champion of *Ulysses*, abuses Tertullian; but is not Mr.

Joyce a modern Tertullian, and worse? In my *Mella Patrum* I can find nothing of Tertullian which shows such repugnance for humanity, which teaches such abhorrence of the human body, and particularly of sexual relations, as I find in *Ulysses*. Some people find Mr. Joyce "indecent and repulsive"; repulsive he may be, if you believe in human happiness, human goodness and human relations. But not indecent in any seductive sense. He is no Laclos or Crébillon fils. He reminds me of St. Bernard discoursing of the horror of death: "Tunc veniet corpus in pallorem et horrorem, in saniem et fetorem; erit vermis et cibus vermium." Or again, most strongly of Odo of Cluny when he abuses women foully: "If men could see beneath the skin . . the very sight of women would be disgusting to them. Consider what is hidden in women's nostrils, in their throats, in their stomachs: filth everywhere . . . And we who would not touch with our finger-tips vomit or dung —how can we long to clasp in our arms a mere bag of excrements!" Transpose the urbanities of these holy men into the "tone" of Bloom's meditations, and who would not swear they were passages from *Ulysses?* Ought we to allow our admiration for Mr. Joyce's talents to blind us to the falsity of his views on life? Certainly not all the sanctity of Odo and Bernard will ever make me forgive them their Naturalisme. After all, this is a false view of life unless suicide be our aim. Logically, I see no end to *Ulysses* except the suicide of Bloom, though no doubt it will terminate in the pleasant purlieus of a public lavatory.

Every artist is perfectly free to advance his own theories of life, however far he may wander from the sublime mediocrities of truth. And, indeed, there is so much that is true in *Ulysses* that to pick out the false from the true would be a lengthy process. All I wish to say now is that I think Mr. Joyce overstresses certain aspects of existence which most writers foolishly ignore, that he tries to convince us that life is less attractive than we had thought even in our most depressed moods. I remember reading one of the "Episodes" about three years ago in a front-line trench, and I think the situation was most appropriate. There indeed were vile smells, abrupt nerve-racking noises, dirt and disease; life was confined to a dismal hide-and-

seek with annihilation; the conveniences, the amenities of existence were reduced to the compass of a large hole underground; lack of sleep, nerves, monotonous diet, no baths had made us all fit subjects for Mr. Joyce's sneers and satire. We, whom the noisy voices of two continents vaunted as heroes, by a singular irony were no more than a red-eyed, muddy, unshaved set of "pitiful rascals" puddling along duck-boards, crawling among shell-holes and rusty wire, dodging ferocious instruments of death, wholly absorbed in the problem of how to live until the next relief, and completely depressed by the impossibility of escape. But were we despicable? Had we poor infantry cannon-fodder—apt symbols of humanity in a world whose misery seems to have neither purpose nor justification—had we nothing to set against our grotesque sufferings? Let those answer "No" who never knew the comradeship of the front line, who never saw a man give his life for another, who never shared that dumb, profound kindness of common men under a mutual disaster. I knew that comradeship; I knew an obscure soldier who lay out under a heavy barrage to give the comfort of his presence to two wounded men, though he could easily have escaped to safety, and was indeed ordered to do so; I have known an officer lose his life to save his servant's. And I say that such things, obscure, unknown, show that men are not wholly debased, even by the disgusting savagery of war, that they can be equally superior in the disgusting vulgarities of daily existence. I say, moreover that when Mr. Joyce, with his marvellous gifts, uses them to disgust us with mankind, he is doing something which is false and a libel on humanity.

That is my opinion of Mr. Joyce's *Ulysses*. From the point of view of art there is some justification for Mr. Joyce; he has succeeded in writing a most remarkable book; but from the point of view of human life I am sure he is wrong. Moreover, the style of *Ulysses*, which Mr. Joyce usually handles successfully, will be as deplorably false in his imitators as his philosophy. *Ulysses* is a gigantic soliloquy. Bloom is a kind of rags and tatters Hamlet, a proletarian Lear, "mirroring" life and showing it to be hideous. Mr. Joyce has pushed the intimate detailed analysis of character to a point further than any

writer I know. His faithful reproduction of Bloom's thoughts, with their inconsequence, their staccato breaks, their returns to an obsession, is an astonishing psychological document. The telegraphic method is there apt and justified. And there is also a good artistic reason for the abandonment of all unity of prose tone, a unity always observed by the French Naturalistes. Sometimes Mr. Joyce writes journalese; sometimes a kind of prose poetry; sometimes a rapid narrative; often the telegraphic prose of Bloom's thoughts; occasionally he is deliberately obscene; too often he is incoherent. Yet in nearly every case he achieves his "effect." He has done daring but quite wonderful things with words. He can be sober, ironic, disgusting, platitudinous, sarcastic, realistic, just as he wishes. He has telescoped drama with narrative, and varies the tone of his narrative to suit the dramatic situation. He is no longer objective, no more the detached narrator; he wishes to identify himself with his subject, and to identify both with the reader. It is this which makes me say he has made realism mystic. He has lost the sense of mental boundaries; his writing is a sort of self-abandonment, a merging of his consciousness in that of others. I am no philosopher to explain this process, but I am certain it has occurred and that M. Julien Benda could analyse it perfectly and pitilessly. In Mr. Joyce it is acceptable because he does dominate it, just as his singular prose is readable because he controls it completely; but imagine this peculiar mysticism degenerated into mere sloppiness and loose thinking; imagine this heterogeneous style degenerated into incoherence, affectation, and wordy confusion, and then think what will be the result of Mr. Joyce's influence. I attach no overwhelming importance to the Dadaistes; as I am reminded, they have not managed to destroy M. Anatole France; but a whole generation of Dada in England and France would be rather deplorable. If the Dadaistes wish to destroy literature by making it ridiculous (as they have declared), they are welcome to try; but I think they should not be encouraged. Yet Mr. Joyce, with his great undisciplined talent, is more dangerous than a ship-load of Dadaistes. Young writers will be dominated by his personality; they will copy his eccentricities instead of developing their own minds. If only we could treat Mr.

Joyce as Plato recommends; give him praise and anoint him with oil, and put a crown of purple wool on his head, and send him to the United States.

III

There is no art without originality; there is no originality without personality. And a man's personality is developed, altered, moulded as much by the books he reads as by the friends he frequents. A man's library reveals him nearly as much as his wife. Imitation in art nearly always results in falsity; it is the curse of modern culture. Academic literature, founded on imitation of classic and accepted writers, is notoriously pallid and boring; "radical" literature, founded on the imitation of the eccentricities of new writers, is incoherent, vapid, and often imbecile. A style which is allusive, derived, full of quotations, is a bad style because it is pedantic and lifeless; and a style which is affected, strained for effect, incomprehensible, is a bad style because the only reason for using words is to make ourselves understood. Merely to astonish simple-minded people with profound looking imbecilities is not literature; it is playing the fool in print. But though all conscious or unconscious imitation of other writers is a literary vice, there is a perfectly real and useful influence in the frequentation of good books. I do not think it any praise to say that a man writes as if he had never read a book; I should think it was praise to say he had read a great many good books, and that he wrote without imitating them but trained and polished by their example. Imitations of Shakespeare are always repulsive and absurd, but it is certain that because of Shakespeare the greatest English poets have a verbal richness and imagination almost unknown in French poetry. A man who imitates the gestures or copies the witticisms of his friends is rightly despised; but we do not despise a man who is formed and enlightened by contact with the world. The same may be said of a writer and the books he frequents, for they, too, are friends not to be imitated but studied. We should not advise a young man who wished to acquire a knowledge of life to spend all his time between Mile End and the East India Dock; it would be just as foolish to confine a young writer to Rimbaud, Dostoievsky, and Mr.

Joyce, who, I believe, are "it" in advanced circles. A prose style founded on Madame de Sévigné could not be vulgar though it might be lifeless, could not be incoherent though it might be insipid. And the tendency of modern literature—I mean the experimental, non-commercial kind—is towards vulgarity and incoherence and away from distinction and sobriety.

I have not wandered from Mr. Joyce. His influence, which I dare to prophesy will be considerable, cannot be a wholly good one. He is disgusting with a reason; others will be disgusting without reason. He is obscure and justifies his obscurity; but how many others will write mere confusion and think it sublime? How many dire absurdities will be brought forth, with *Ulysses* as midwife? Mr. Joyce himself is little influenced by his contemporaries, though he is obviously steeped in Church writers, the classics and French literature. He has read the Russians perhaps more than is good for him. But he is not one of those superficial people who pick up some shallow artifice as the canon of a new form of art; he will be the prey of coteries, but he himself is far above them. I recall an interesting remark of M. Marcel Proust. He says that Hugo was deep in Dion Cassius and Tacitus when he was at his most romantic, that M. Denis was daily at the Louvre while producing his most individual pictures. I have myself met Gaudier Brzeska prowling furtively about the Elgin marbles. New art, says M. Proust, is for the public, but classic art is for the artists. The young writer should not neglect his contemporaries, but his chief companions ought to be the classics. *Ulysses* is dangerous reading for anyone whose style is unformed. If I had a younger friend who wanted to write, and would accept my advice, I would conceal from him the works of Mr. Joyce and set him on Pascal and Voltaire, with Mr. George Moore and Flaubert as light reading. And when he knew the value of clarity, sobriety, precision—the good manners of literature—I would hand him Mr. Joyce's books with the highest eulogy and little fear of the consequences.

"Twice Nightly"

By C. Neville Brand

NIGHT comes strangely to London in the Autumn, creeping in far above the roofs, a vast grey scarf that is held waiting to drop down over the houses. It hangs there, thin and yet impenetrable, slowly coming lower towards the lights that go streaming out to meet it. In the heart of the town the lighted windows seem to climb up the dusky faces of their buildings as shop windows and showcases are shuttered, giving place to the rosy windows of sitting-rooms and bedrooms above. Blue shades from mercury burners that make the passers-by like walking corpses, ruddy arcs spluttering among the dried leaves of the plane trees, glass porticoes with their rows of bulbs like luminous balloons, taxicabs with oil lamps that dance along the streets, all go to make up the sum of the glow in the sky that is London at night. And above them all hang the great sky signs—whisky, gramophones, bovril, theatres, with the globe of the Coliseum that is king of them all, like a sad captured planet throbbing in its agony. Richard Carle wriggled over on to his side and tugged irritably at the sheet. A corner of his pillow had worked itself into a lump for the twentieth time that day, leaving him with his head sunk down in a hard crescent of bolster, so that his neck ached. He muttered to himself as he tried to arrange the bed more comfortably; there seemed to be dry crumbs tucked in all the creases of the sheets; a book fell to the floor with a crash; the room was growing dim and even more dreary than it was by day. And he knew that when it reached a certain degree of darkness the horror would begin.

After long weeks of lying there, he could tell almost to the minute when it would start. He would lie with his eyes tight shut, his face buried in the pillow, pretending that it was not coming. But always there came the moment when he had to look up and always, without fail, with a regularity that was the regularity of the setting sun, it was

there. And to-night, because his wife had had to go to the other side of London, visiting some sick relative, there was no one to pin the curtain over that kept out some of it at least. The blind was useless; it had a jagged tear with frayed ends that hung down and flapped when the window was open.

He screwed up his face and held his hands over his closed eyes; his knees were drawn up towards him, so that they made with the bedclothes a miniature mountain that blocked out the square of the window.

But that would be of no avail, for the thing would come right into the room and search him out, wherever he were.

He prayed: "Oh, God, stop it, stop it! Just for to-night, for one night. Make it be Sunday to-night."

And when the effort of the prayer was past he opened a wary eye to see if his appeal had been answered, and the thing was there, glaring at him; first red, then white, then green, then a mixture of all three, proclaiming to the world the legend, "TWICE NICHTLY, AT 6.30 & 8.45," together with the names of half a dozen dancers, comedians, acrobats. Richard Carle laughed, and pulled the thin sheet over his head, looking through it at the lights. Seen through the fabric they were distant, but none the less brilliant, and they winked wickedly through interstices in the weft of the calico.

He laughed because he pitied himself; there was something ironically funny in the spectacle of a sick man tortured by the mere names of comedians and dancing women who were probably at that very moment dressing to go through their performances within a mile of him. As the months of his illness went by he began to know their names. He made calculations as to when they would come back again. That meant success and popularity, coming back quickly. Fellows outside used to whistle their songs. And some of them had short names that did not make such a glare with the lights, but the "TWICE NIGHTLY, AT 6.30 & 8.45" never varied, and that was the part of the sign that was most difficult to shut out.

He lay flat on his back watching the coloured shafts of light which jumped across the ceiling. He fell to wondering what it was like to come all alone on to a big stage and sing and make jokes, with all those people staring at you.

It must take some nerve, you must feel very sure of yourself. "TWICE NIGHTLY, TWICE NIGHTLY"; all these strange things seemed to happen at night. You couldn't imagine them coming on and doing their turns in broad daylight.

The book was lying on the floor with its pages open, a dusty grey object that looked as though it was floating along close above the carpet. A clock in the rooms below struck eight; his mind wandered off into an uneasy region of sleep, but his body lay stiff, twitching now and then as the light played around his bed. It was to a nightmare land that sleep led him, where it was always dark, and where men and women whose souls were myriads of electric lights danced along the streets seeking Richard Carle to do him some harm, and shouting songs whose refrain was, "TWICE NIGHTLY." The sound of the door opening awoke him, and he sat up in bed, quivering. A little girl peeped shyly into the room. "Mother says, is there anything you want, please? She's got the kettle on if you want a warm drink."

"No, dear, thank you." He shielded his face with a hand to see her better. "Thank your mother for me. There's nothing I want; I'm much better now. Go away, dear, but you'll come back in time, won't you, and bring all the others you can. Don't be late, we can't be kept waiting, it's so very important. You know what time to come, they keep telling you everywhere—eight forty-five, a quarter to nine; and I'm on early to-night because I've been ill. Just bring the others, and don't tell mother, because she might not let you come."

The child stood as though she were waiting for him to say something more, then she closed the door slowly, and he heard her go down the stairs.

"Time to be getting ready," he said.

He knelt up and reached over for the matches, with which he lighted the candle. Taking the cork from a medicine bottle he held it in the flame until it was charred. Then, very slowly, he crawled down to the end of the bed and leaned over the rail, so that he could see his face in a small mirror that hung on the wall. And there, by the intermittent light of the flashing thing that had been his horror, he decorated his face with dark streaks to represent a

grotesque moustache and thickened his eyebrows and shaded his eyes that were already sunken and dark-ringed. The operation completed, he got back into bed, rubbed the stump of the cork on the underside of the table and replaced it in the bottle. He lay down, carefully holding his face away from the pillow so that the "make-up" should not be smeared. The clock down below struck the half-hour; he lay very still, listening. As the minutes passed, his head began to nod slightly as if to the rhythm of music. He was just getting out of bed when the children came in, a silent little party of four, awe-stricken at the strangeness of the adventure. "Please, Mr. Carle, we've come."

"Sit down, children; two of you on the chest of drawers there and two of you can get on to that chair."

The chair was pulled across, they scrambled up, their legs dangling. "I'm afraid I sha'n't be very good, not to-night. You see, I've been ill, and I may forget."

The small audience gazed at him, saying nothing, scarcely moving. He stood up straight, a quaint figure in baggy pyjamas, holding the edge of the table, and fumbling with one foot for a slipper.

"We don't want lights in the front of the house."

He blew out the candle. He held up a warning finger, and began to sing, faintly at first, and then louder as the interest of the doggerel verses grew upon him.

"My old woman is a queer old gal,
She says I shan't go out, but I shall.
I'll take the key and she won't know,
'Cos she won't hear me when I go."

He jogged his shoulders and attempted a shuffling dance at the end of the verse, but the lights outside were swinging, and he steadied himself against the bed.

"She says to me, 'If you come home late
I'll borrow an iron and smash your pate.'
But I'm no kid, I know a thing or two,
I'll go out and borrow one too."

The children made no comment, they kept their legs still and their heels, pressed against the wood of the chest of drawers, scraped and squeaked.

"My old girl has gone to a show,
Twice nightly, too, in the very front row."

He tried to kick a leg in the air, and his slipper came off and slid across the room, but the performance was finished for him. Richard Carle, the comedian of one night, stumbled, turned round and fell across the bed. His audience sat waiting for more, but he did not move. When they realised that there was no more to expect, they slipped from their places and went out, closing the door very softly as they left him.

Where Poetry Stands

By Gerald Gould

THERE is—they say—a slump in poetry. Poetry—they say—is not what it was. This is just what they say of farming, or of brewing. The sayings are ambiguous: they may refer to the quality of the product, or to the public's appetite for it: and they may mislead us by the vague suggestion that the latter depends upon the former.

The first fallacy, then, to clear away from our minds, when we ask where poetry stands, is the supposition that art and recognition go together. The fact that they do not makes the difficulty of contemporary criticism. Given the long view of posterity, recognition probably does overtake art: somehow or other, the commonsense of the most scrupulous minds asserts itself over the fundamental indifference of those whose facile and factitious enthusiasm is for the craze of the moment; and even the austere and the difficult among writers come into their own some hundreds of years after they have ceased to be read. But it is a matter of centuries: one century is not enough. Are we sure that we have "placed" Byron yet? Or Keats? Meanwhile, for the products of the spring and autumn publishing seasons, we must use our best judgment—with humility.

A little while ago there was a boom in poetry. Everybody read poetry: and it seemed as if more than everybody wrote it. Then came a reaction; and some say the reaction is still going on, though others have happier tidings. I do not know; but I do know that, even if there were a slump, it would not necessarily depress the true poetry-lover. When a wave of enthusiasm carries the reading public away, so that anyone can sell, and anyone will buy, anything which has a regular margin down one side of the

page and an irregular margin down the other (or even verse which dispenses with that ancient formula)—the enthusiasm may be perfectly sincere, perfectly honourable; but it need not be enthusiasm for poetry.

The truth is that there is *no* connection, one way or the other, between merit and popularity. Unbought poets used to comfort themselves with the thought that they were "too good" for the public; they recalled that Shelley had no circulation in his lifetime, and explained the popularity of Byron or Tennyson by the baser qualities of those great writers. Nowadays, however, you can be as good as Mr. Hodgson or Mr. de la Mare, and sell: you can be as good as Miss Mew* and *not* sell; you can be as bad as (the names will suggest themselves), and sell; you can be as bad as (need I say?), and *not* sell. It is not a question of merit, but of kind; and the kind itself is incalculable. Who would have prophesied that the delicate, rare, reticent, fantastic genius of Mr. de la Mare would move so wide an audience? In asking where poetry stands, one must not ask how many people buy it. The poet's concern is with God. And yet what a prig he must appear if he affects to care nothing whatever about his public! For if he does not want to be read, and by as many readers as may be, why does he publish? Even Browning's cheery acceptance of the fact that the British public, as he himself said, "liked him not," fails to ring true. The very way in which he wrote about the neglect which he suffered shows that it pressed uneasily upon some nerve. Why did he write about it at all?

For a poet to be perfectly true to the kindred points of God and public; perfectly sure, and perfectly humble—that is as difficult as the perfection of virtue in any human being in any other aspect. What one would have a right to reprobate is, not mere human deviation from an unattainable ideal, but the definite, deliberate, cold-blooded prostitution of verse-writing to commercial ends. If that goes on—if that is what is meant when people say that poetry is in a bad way, and if they are justified in what they say—then poetry is in a bad way indeed. But I do not think it does go on.

* This was written before the publication of the new and enlarged edition of Miss Mew's poems—to which I wish all good fortune.

Of course, there are "cliques." Of course, there are "personal considerations."

The innocent public would hold up its hands in horror did it know of the personal motives which sometimes (only *sometimes*—most editors are, I believe, both just and generous) influence the giving or withholding of favourable reviews. But the whole question is—Would the public have a right to hold up its hands in horror? Why should it expect of literary folk a standard it does not exact from itself? Will it name any one walk of life in which "personal considerations" don't count—in which favouritism doesn't "govern kissage"? Ah, but, the public will retort, poets profess such high ideals! They are always writing about God, and Love, and Justice, and Honour, and everything else that begins with a capital; and so are the critics; and they ought to practise what they preach! No doubt; but the rebuke is illegitimate all the same. Does anyone profess higher or more impersonal ideals than the politician on the platform?—and does *he* live up to them? Or consider the clergymen in their pulpits; and are *they* perfect? Not merely the literary man, but human nature, has "two soul-sides"; the human heart is unfortunately corrupt.

Mr. Harold Monro's little book on contemporary poets* deals rather in detached judgments (with many of which I heartily disagree) than in generalisations; nevertheless, it is that book which has started me on this train of thought. For, in a rather bitter first chapter, he maintains that: "Verse-writing in the year 1920 is a professional occupation." One's first reflection is that, *as* a profession, it must be the most sweated of all—worse even than teaching. Few indeed are the poets who, by the grossest output and the strictest meditation of editors, could hope to earn a living wage by poetry. Speaking, wittily enough, of what he calls the "young professional," Mr. Monro says: "He dreams of the impression his poem will make on the public mind, until that dream becomes more absorbing than the creation of the poem itself, and his desire to be thought a poet is stronger than his love of poetry." It may be so. There are temptations in the world, and men and women fall to them. If there be any such as Mr. Monro delineates,

* *Some Contemporary Poets.* By Harold Monro. Leonard Parsons. 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

they are subjects rather for tears than for sarcasm. They have lost so much, and gained, after all, so little. What is the all-but-biggest reputation, that anyone should put himself about to get it? I am not moralising. I am not comparing worldly fame with treasures laid up in heaven: I am comparing reputations simply with reputations. Few even of the most ambitious living writers of verse can hope to achieve the fame once enjoyed by Swinburne, say, or Rossetti: yet has either of those great poets left a fame, to so early a posterity as this, which, judged purely and simply *as* fame, is worth the sale of even a small part of a soul—to say nothing of a good dinner? If one could leave the fame of a Shakespeare, now——! But (the old paradox) if one *were* Shakespeare, one would be concerned with more important things. This is a case in which a sense of humour is a better protection even than a sense of honour.

The despised Tennyson wrote honourably and humorously in *The Spiteful Letter*:

O little bard, is your lot so hard,
If men neglect your pages?
I think not much of yours or mine,
I hear the roll of the ages.

. . . . . .

This faded leaf, our names are as brief;
What room is left for a hater?
Yet the yellow leaf hates the greener leaf,
For it hangs one moment later.

Greater than I, is that your cry?
And men will live to see it.
Well—if it be so—so it is, you know;
And if it be so, so be it.

And again, in *Literary Squabbles*:

Ah God! the petty fools of rhyme
That shriek and sweat in pigmy wars,
Before the stony face of Time,
And look'd at by the silent stars.

. . . . . .

When one small touch of Charity
Could lift them nearer God-like state,
Than if the crowded Orb should cry
Like those who cried Diana great.

Mr. Monro, in the suggestions he makes about the methods of "young professionals," gives perhaps a greater bias to his book than he intended. He does not allow sufficiently, I think, for the tug of the subconscious. It

is perfectly true that, on occasions (not that this is one of Mr. Monro's instances) A. will say of B.: "He reviewed my book cordially—I will do the same for him"; or, again: "He slanged my book—I will boycott his." Such motives work, such things happen, not merely in the literary world, but in the worlds political, military, social, sporting and ecclesiastical (re-read *Barchester Towers*!). Only, what really happens, nine times out of ten, is something much less conscious. A. honestly *does* feel that B. is a sound fellow: B.'s good sense in appreciating A. is but one proof of it. Or A. honestly does feel that B. is a pernicious fellow, boomed by the little B.-ites into a position dangerous to British letters, and using his power for the crude depreciation of true art. The rest is silence. Editors, critics, poets are all human.

Even Mr. Munro himself, who is as honest as the day, is human. Throughout his book is obvious, over and above some other "imperfect sympathies," the trend of a perfectly definite prejudice, of which I dare swear he is wholly unconscious. Quite near the beginning, he tells us that Mr. A. E. Housman has no genius. One suspects, then, that he has, unknown to himself, some subconscious criterion of "genius" other than sheer—genius. And, as one reads on, it becomes apparent what that criterion is. Almost all the poets in whom Mr. Monro is really *interested*—not all whom he praises, but almost all whom he praises with any sort of personal gusto—are experimenters. Some of them are simply incompetent; some of them are partially and painfully successful in a sphere of achievement which, I venture to think, has precious little to do with poetry; two, at least, of them have spontaneity, inevitability—genius. But to Mr. Monro they are all fascinating, good and bad alike, because they are out of the tradition. What Mr. Monro fails to see is that, in his genuine detestation of schools and cults, he is but setting up one more school, one more cult.

The cloven hoof obtrudes itself at the end, when Mr. Monro says: "Verse is undoubtedly inferior to prose as a medium, but it is easier to write." Mr. Monro, of course, does not really think that—or he would keep a Prose Bookshop. As for "ease" and "difficulty" of writing, they simply are not critical questions at all. Criticism

must judge result, not effort. It is as easy to write bad, slipshod prose as it is to write bad, slipshod verse. It is as easy to write careful, correct, uninspired, unnecessary prose as it is to write verse of the same character. But when you come to the inevitable achievement of genius, it is, in either or any medium, neither easy nor difficult: that is because it *is* inevitable. Either a thing is said once for all, or it is not. If it is, it is one of the things worth saying once for all, since only such things can be so said. And such a thing so said is poetry. I admit no distinction between great poetry and other kinds of poetry. If a thing is poetry at all, it is great because it is poetry.

Mr. Monro's remark, however, helps us to realise where poetry stands. It stands in peril of formulæ—particularly of the formula that you mustn't have a formula. If a true lover of poetry can say such a thing as I have just quoted, what will be said by the less learned and the less sincere? The old forms are often alleged to be "played out"—conventional, monotonous. It is said to be "too easy" to write a sonnet. Well, naturally it is easy to write a bad sonnet; but you do not escape from that difficulty by being unconventional; it is ludicrously, pathetically easy to write a bad poem in "free verse." A *good* poem, in either the one form or the other, determines its own form.

And this brings us to the heart of the matter. For really it is not poetry at all that stands in peril. It is criticism. Poetry cannot die. Poetry cannot even "have a bad time" or "be in a bad way." At some times there are more great poets than at others. But there are always poets; and, in so far as they *are* poets, they will always quietly go on their own way, saying nothing when they have nothing to say, and, when they cannot help saying something, saying it in a form they cannot help. And criticism, whose business it is to encourage that single devotion, to hold up always the test and example of the good and true, will stultify itself if it enquires: "Does this belong to such-and-such a school?" instead of simply: "Is this poetry?" Here is the true danger of cliques—that they exalt the method above the message. They make clean the outside of the cup and the platter.

It may not be humanly possible to avoid them. But it is divinely necessary to try.

"Woman"

By "Lucifer"

INTRODUCED by Henri Barbusse, Romain Rolland, Bertrand Russell, Brandes, etc., *Woman*, a novel by a woman, comes to us through a translation "tanked in" against all criticism, and certainly the book is considerably more than the romance of ordinary fiction. In the decade preceding the war, sex was the great European controversy, the result of the devastating blows of Ibsen, Nietzsche, and Strindberg, caught up on the one hand by Ellen Key of Scandinavia, and on the other by the Jewish iconoclasm of the boy, Weininger: who at the age of nineteen compounded a philosophic generalisation dealing with the sex of shattering and startling comprehension. From Ibsen's "Doll" to Christabel Pankhurst, we can to-day discern a liberating movement which closed physically with the great war. All countries took a hand in the demolition, especially the Northern peoples. Science bumped in, headed by the Germans; we responded with Havelock Ellis. In the struggle, policemen lost their gravity and helmets; here we seemed to have found a solution in the granting of the suffrage, characteristically English, for all movements in this country tend to become absorbed in politics, which, of course, settle nothing, still less sex, as we see to-day in the thousand and one divorce cases and the admitted breakdown of our old ecclesiastical polity.

As the war leaves us bruised and wondering, perhaps the only positive thing that emerges is the fact of this demolition. Woman has been "found out." She has not issued culturally, morally, or spiritually higher in men's estimation. The war machine engulfed her. The sex that did not fight merely played a war, a complementary, part. Mothers, wives, lovers, sisters were of, and subject to, the machine, and now that peace has come, women, we are told by women themselves, have, even in the country of the suf-

frage, no specific feminine attitude, no sex mind socially or politically, no differentiating condition. Which in itself is neither particularly surprising nor significant, relatively to the chaos existing among the male sex on practically all matters appertaining to life and the reconstruction of civilisation. To expect more of women than of men politically would be unreasonable. If then the political side of woman hardly seems to matter to-day, the art side of woman is beginning to matter considerably.

Such a book is *Woman*, by Magdeleine Marx, a Frenchwoman, which suggests also a new art-form, thus providing a double creative interest. In England we have hardly any fiction dealing faithfully with sex, or even attempting to, as George Moore has pointed out, a fact which may roughly be put down to politics, to the extraordinary political development of man in these islands, in which morals or the Church played a directing part based logically enough upon the laws of possession which made us the most monarchical institution in Europe. The "freedom" of woman here dated from the fall of the House of Lords, which broke the feudal rights of privilege, and from that time the movement has progressed automatically. That this movement will cease with the vote we can already see to be an illusion. The problem remains—sex. And instinctively women to-day reflect that feeling in their art, which, in striking contrast to the work of the other sex, shows marked characteristics of revolt; of a striving to get away from the old forms and conventions, to break out, so to speak, into a new plane of thought and activity.

The key-note of this literary mentality is sincerity. Their conscious objective stands out as the man-made universe. They are not going to be content with the power to vote once every five years. Law, Church authority, chivalry, sex—these are the enemy, and as the initial step the scalpel is the instrument. This is what is new. Women are to-day beginning to write about sex, about their own sex, truthfully, dissectingly. They are seeking a diagnosis. Notably, it is not so much man, the father, the animal, the dominator that they visualise, but the mother, the lover, the age-long imprisoned woman of the Churches; it is not an antagonism so much as a negation that they would remove; essentially, they are up against themselves.

This no doubt is the reason of the new introspective or psycho-analytical feminine literature which sounds the modern note so distinct from that of the Brontës, Jane Austen, George Eliot, Georges Sand, Ouida, to whom sex-characterisation was still a formula, as it is on the "screen" or in melodrama. In *Woman* the feminine ego is as significant and pronounced as the male I of Nietzsche, from whom doubtless this chord of self-gratification is derived. The male in the book is purely reflective; he is a mirror introduced to sharpen and set off the conflicting sex attributes, contrary to fictional convention. "I am here," she ends her book. It is a new social attestation. It is the feminine Zarathustra imposing her will to live: to blossom individually and no longer matriarchally; to unfold the new life of sex-truthfulness before man. Ultimate conclusions are avoided, nor is there any attempt to propound a philosophy. Her business is self-analysis; revelation of woman in her stages of unfolding into the conscious part and antithesis of man. The interest lies in the obvious sincerity with which the author approaches sex. Motherhood will not in the future be all. Woman will claim the right to love, by which she implies the right over her own body as opposed to tradition. But she must learn to be truthful towards men. To claim responsibility, she must prove herself responsible. In the new order woman must win to her own life and right of being. She must raise the ethics of sex by sex-consciousness. If she is to cease to be a possession, woman must establish sex-sincerity. Love must be freed from law. The new aim of woman will be life, the full understanding of its purpose and fulfilments. Beauty will remain woman's "secret," but man will mean more to her than a father; he will be her self-completion in mutual evolution.

In form, too, this book is new and admirably sustained, and in deft and unexpected ways the author penetrates the "mysteries" of sex without stint or false shame. It is a work of art. We get not only a soul but the promptings of the physical. We are in contact with the new woman, as she fleshes her own sex. We have the intellectual woman impersonal enough to diagnose her own case objectively, we sense in her the spirituality of a freed consciousness.

Ten years ago this book could not have been written by a woman. It is the fruit partly of the war, of suffering, of disillusion. Without sharing the somewhat extravagant praise allotted to it by Henri Barbusse, we on this side can hardly fail to appreciate the sincerity and beauty of a "confession" which at least shows that women are alive: alive to themselves, and their own evolution.

This straining and striving on the part of writing women for a new expression of life is not confined to the Continent; we have them here palpably and creatively, foremost among whom stands Dorothy M. Richardson. Her latest book, *Deadlock* (Duckworth), is in a vital sense the counterpart to Magdeleine Marx, though in her case the derivation is not Nietzsche, it is, aggravatingly, Henry James, with results remote from the comfortable or æsthetic. The difference is cultural. The Frenchwoman is essentially an artist, and even in form she establishes a unity of thought and presentation which is essential poetry. *Deadlock* is characteristically Northern in logic, in tone, in sensibility of purpose, and in the whole volume there is no so arresting an illumination as in the phrase of Magdeleine Marx, apostrophising her sleeping son, "I do not find that you are the profound motive." There we have a challenge: to culminate in the definite formula, "I think—I want—I know," of the work-willing woman on the threshold of the new humanity; and we perforce recognise in this gathering and re-statement of being the force of a living whole.

Dorothy Richardson, I confess, is a puzzle, at times maddening. She is not a poet, clearly she has not as yet solved her problem. Too involved for æstheticism, perhaps not intellectual enough, her discernment is still epicene, so that, brilliant as the thing is, we do not catch the creative emanation, we only wrestle with it; we are not moved. It may be that she has no message, though unmistakably she has a motif which in her indeterminate manner is woman. She, too, strikes the note—sincerity. It is the man-made world she scratches against. Like a bird in a cage, she beats against the bars of her prison, seeking the beyond. Yet her judgments are strikingly sound, and notably her foil or glass is a Russian Jew. The intellectual objectivity is apparent. She has passed the

barriers of emotionalism, of subjectivity, of acquiescence; she is the new spirit of her sex in quest of the new foundations, and for that reason she is perhaps the most symptomatic, if not significant, of our present-day women writers, whom already she is sensibly influencing.

With her also, form is instrumental if not rebellious. One has the impression that her atmosphere is heavily charged. But the identity does not emerge like that of the Frenchwoman; we do not get beneath the mind; the flesh and blood of her Miriam elude the grasp, almost one fears midnight oil, so apparitional is this femininity in the vesture of the schools. But in substance the voice is woman shifting ground, seeking new associations, throwing off the spell of the physical world as designed by man, postulating a distinctive reconsecration of being.

Man, the greedy lover and possessor, this is the obstacle, and against it, approaching it now with cumulative comprehension, the woman torch-bearer of to-day advances under her own standard. The philosophic reason lies undoubtedly in the elimination of fear, which for ages has been the argument of the Churches. In a word, woman has been directed from Heaven back to earth. She no longer fears. Tired of chivalry which in a commercial world means purchasing power, no longer atrophied by fear of hell-fire, she too has become a thinker and philosopher; she dares; she welcomes disillusionment; in place of the poet's incantation—"So sweet the tear in woman's eye"—she would take her *journalier* place, humbly, intelligently, economically as the companion and coadjunct of man. We return to humanity, to a practicant Christianity. Almost time, the cynic may well remark. Also inevitable. Long ago, posthumous punishment had forfeited its terrors; the war quietly removed the old tradition. Thus women have lost their meridian, and their gain is earthly freedom. The miracle has come about overnight. The old three-foot rule has gone. A new morality is needed. Women seek new dimensions. The women of the new generation are here, capable of what? Meaning, who knows? Promising, what man or woman can tell?

It is this "discovery" of the relativity of death that will bring about the new woman, the discovery so finely sensed by Magdeleine Marx that "death kills only the dead."

Life goes on. The child, who inevitably escapes from the mother, is life, thus the mother also is life, in accordance with our moral purpose—humanity. Hitherto, women have not so thought, have not been allowed so to think. That this reconstruction of the life purpose must in time alter our interpretation of love and so of marriage as regards women is obvious, for the revolt largely visualises the "exclusiveness" of love as it affects the bodily and mental development of the subject sex. Acquiescence will no longer be the law. Women will attain to a philosophy of life. A woman's attitude will emerge, and out of it there will arise the new social religion.

For the time this evolution will no doubt be confined to the literary activity of women, but it is alive, and women are to-day writing with a larger sincerity than men whose mentality is still obfuscated by war with its unavoidable imprisonment of creation.

Not the least interesting feature in this feminine cerebration is the search for a new form of expression which inevitably will influence the novel. In neither book is there any movement. Nobody kisses, dies or slays. Both writers show that pantomime is not necessary to art, and in both the key-note is sincerity. That is the essential projection. Both women welcome facts, seek truths, strip to new accommodations. Naked, they are not ashamed. Their demand is life, the equality of life's opportunities. In their quest for that which "transcends love," they have already escaped beyond love's tyranny. They are creators. The "woman of no importance" of Oscar Wilde is behind us. Sex is to be no longer an art insulation, a civic disability. Sex, too, will be communised, associable economically. As Magdeleine Marx says, "love does not reconcile the primitive hatred between man and woman," which is, of course, the human problem and mirage of marriage. The issue is rather the mother. "It is the mother we should try to save." And this. "Love is not enough." Here is the spirit and the heart's cry. It is the new voice in our uprooted humanity, the impulse of civilised, of emancipating, woman.

Falstaff's Plain English

By S. O.

What a pity it is, cries Falstaff, that "when the English get a good thing they make it common." Those words, which all can hear at the admirable presentation of *Henry IV.* at the Court—once more, as of old, holding up the sustenance of art—stand out like the great star, Venus, and for that evening I could think of nothing else. More up-to-date than Nelson Keys, perennial in its psychology, this message, swinging down through hundreds of years of history, bites into the conscience, for in a flash we discern genius: immortality. This is Shakespeare indestructibly one with England. He might have been thinking of the modern herd sense, of the formless mediocrity of Demos unbound, so apposite is the reflection, yet when he wrote that, England was robustiously feudal, illiterate, insular, and it was addressed essentially to the nobility. In the words, the meaning of history is apparent. We are—what we were. Our continuity of race assumes a significance almost chokingly intimate. Our pageantry has come down to us untarnished. We re-live the past; we are with the ages; we see Shakespeare to be one of us, and in Falstaff we obtain our measurement. He is the genius of England. Probably, as we listen to-day, our mentality is pretty much what it was in 1600, when Shakespeare was writing of the "dark lady," and we may claim that in no other country is this so, or can it be so, so curiously have we preserved our traditions and idiosyncrasies, our gestures, and even our sense of humour, in the serenity of our island home.

And that is, of course, why people say that the Theatre is in a "bad way." It always was. Shakespeare had just as much difficulty with his "actor-proof" plays as we have, and probably more, for he was deprived of actresses, with their attractive confections, and had to make good with filberts of boys, which must have been particularly annoying

to one so sensitive and understanding. Yet he came through. Drink, then as now, was the constant in jokes, but with Shakespeare drink was a vintage. One can picture the poet creating the part of Falstaff, torn with the necessity of "getting his laughs," like the modern playwright caught between the ogle of his Athanasian manager and the prospective giggles of the synthetic "young person" who demands entertainment. Sack they must have, flagons of it. A fat man is always a congenial person. "Doll" will please the "bucks," Pistol the swashbucklers, and so on. It remained but to give them life, but that was Shakespeare's supreme faculty.

To-day these jokes are a little tiresome, for we have moved forward a bit in technique, and, man for man, Sir Harry Lauder is the modern, but Falstaff remains Herculean, and, in comparison, the whole gamut of pantomime, from Sir James Barrie to Robey and the great "Little Tich," is gossamer. The play is still the thing. It is the creation that matters, and that is why, and where, the unfortunate playwright, unless he has private means, or chances to be an American, stumbles in his own despite. That "laugh" paralyses him. Always and all the time, its claims constrict. He dare not be sincere. The stuff he has to "give them" cannot arise automatically from the situations, it has to be superimposed. His people cannot be natural. Idea has to be subordinated to their idea, their idea of idea, which is convention. The brainy wheeze of creation becomes a whoop. For some extraordinary reason, the hero is supposed to be a complete ass, an *ingénu*, the perfect trouser-crease model. His foil has to be a simpleton, like Desdemona. For every one serious remark, two must be mirthful. The modern ghost of the stage presides in the stalls. "Swear," she, he, or it cries. The playwright loses balance. He dare not dare. Next day, the critics read him a lesson in technique.

The Circle is a sample of this ambidextrous antagonism. Clearly, Somerset Maugham has a little modern message, and there is a substratum of philosophy in the play that makes it genuinely interesting. Boldly handled, it should be a brilliant comedy; as it is, it is part farce *more* Oscar Wilde, part false pathos. The antitheses jar. The young

hero is a boor—in love-making, in manners, in style. The girl is too sudden, even for Ibsen. Her husband is a stage politician. The man who missed the Premiership is a carcase. Result, we are confounded; we feel our leg has been gently pulled. Unreality clogs the atmosphere. These people are not to be believed in. They are entertainers. Compare these apparitions with the live creations in *The White-headed Boy*, and we come back, with a jerk, to Falstaff. He steps out of, and commands, his environment; Maugham's characters stick in, and are controlled by, the conditions. As for the lover, why are Englishmen supposed to be such sorry fellows? A lover who, to advance his case, begins by saying "I am a business man" is a "mouldy bung." It is a love scene to get a laugh. Why? The offer to "black" the lady's eyes is theatrical courtship. One thinks of her as a Havelock Ellis "case" or an anti-suffragette. It is difficult to enthuse. Finally, one is sorry for the playwright, whose pretty technique and amusing wit ought to have constructed a fine study in light comedy.

A Social Convenience, jovial, amusing, witty, salacious, has no art pretensions. There too the technique is French, but the mustard English, which makes a difference, one's delight is all the greater at the success achieved by Clemence Dane in *A Bill of Divorcement*, so rarely do women write plays. The Press speak of a sensation. The real sensation is the success of a play which is a play, not a mere entertainment. There is no Oscar Wilde chorus, no epigram, no theatrica-too-re-lady—just that: a play, and it has bowled out critics and public.

That is its importance. A woman, a novice, has done the trick, so disposing of the nonsense talked about technique, and she shows that plays need not be artificial, or epicene or laugh-extractors: which will have a purging effect on managers. It looks a bit like propaganda, yet it probably is not, though to be feared is a repercussion hostile to divorce law reform, for sentiment plays a compelling part in the reaction of sympathy aroused for an ex-soldier returning after eighteen years of shell-shock detention to his wife and home, to find that he has been put asunder. And that scene, with its emotion, is finely contrived, brought in swiftly, antithetically, crashingly, so that men shout as they do when a goal is scored: it comes off. That moment is

real. The theatre lives. The emotion carries away the actors. On both sides—that of the returned man and of the woman about to re-marry—the fight is for life, and at once the immense potential force of the stage becomes apparent; we take sides, we are on the stage of a living drama.

Otherwise, the situation is hypothetical, but there is the fascination of wondering whether "Aunties" will still be so mid-Victorian in 1932 as the lady who back-chats on an ostentatious prayer-book on Christmas Day. Nor are the lovers exciting. They are dangerously like school-girl blocks, the best character is the "new" girl joyously played by Miss Albanesi. On the other hand, the women are neatly observed; they are poised and swing easily, even "Auntie" does that. There seems to be no servant difficulty in 1932.

Up, the artists! That is the net impression; all praise to Clemence Dane, who has pricked a bubble. The elements of drama have returned, and, automatically, gratefully, incontestably, the response also is dramatic.

James Huneker

By Thomas Moult

To have received at a distance of two thousand miles, while reading his recently-published autobiography, the cabled announcement of the end of James Huneker, was to experience the shock of an old friend suddenly expiring before one's eyes, without the faintest prescience of his fate; in full harness, moreover, a moment ago sparkling with gaiety and warmth, sharp and spiced and stinging as though it were decreed that men went on living for ever. Huneker's relish for life and literature was of a type that either endeared him to you or sent you away reviling the country that produced him, and in which he was peculiarly at home, that encouraged all those qualities in him for which we in England have no equivalent; at least, none expressed in our art. A Dionysiac force in criticism, he has been well called, apart as the Poles from our own litterateurs, writing their criticism sadly, our zestless authoritarians. The show of candour and raciness by which certain writers pretend to reveal themselves fails to lessen the distance. There must be something behind it which they do not possess, knowledge rich and ripe; and no suspicion of writing down to the level of one's populace. We have had, in fact, none to put beside Huneker since Shaw's high humour and spirit were dashed in the consulting-room of the author of *Damaged Goods*.

Because it is cheaper to publish American fiction in this country than it is to *print* and publish the work of our own writers, we are at present enabled to learn a good deal about the position of the novel in the United States. But only by chance do we come to know anything of its current criticism of literature. James Huneker's volumes alone appear to have been issued with any regularity in an English edition. Not that this has always been a good thing for Huneker. It was a very indiscriminate sort of regularity, a periodical hotch-potch of all manner of essays dished up from the New York daily journal whose literary

and artistic columns he had edited these many years. One might certainly say that the volumes which came over to us got steadily worse. *Bedouins*, for example, published a year ago, could have served no better purpose, so far as we were able to make the book out, than the diversion of those feverish folk on this side who have been affected by the American avidness for everything that, in Jack London's phrase, has "a kick in it," be it domestic pepper or that music which is said to send its barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world.

If *Bedouins* chanced to be a reader's first introduction to Huneker, he would have been astounded to learn that its author was in his day chosen to present Mr. Shaw's collected essays and opinions on the theatre to the volume-desiring public, or that he was the author of a treatise on Chopin which musicians appear to regard with the highest esteem. To quote from *Bedouins* is none the less to get beneath the surface of sad lapse to the essential character of a style that first cracked and startled English ears many years ago in *Iconoclasts*: "Joyfulness cannot be denied Botticelli; but it is not the golden joy of Giorgione; 'Big George of Castelfranco.' An emaciated music emanates from the eyes of that sad, restless Venus, to whom love has become a scourge of sense and spirit. Music? Yes, there is the 'coloured hearing' of Mendoza. The canvases of Botticelli sound the opalescent overtones of an unearthly composition. Is this Spring, this tender, tremulous virgin, whose right hand, deprecatingly raised, signals as a conductor from invisible orchestra its rhythms? Hermes, supremely impassive, hand on thigh, plucks the fruit as the eternal trio of maidens with woven paces tread the measures of a dance we but overhear. Garlanded in blossoms, a glorious girl keeps time with the pulsing atmospheric moods; her gesture, surely a divine one, shows her casting flowers upon the richly embroidered floor of the earth. The light filters through the thick trees, its rifts as rigid as a candle. The nymph in the brake is threatening. Another epicene creature flies by her. Love shoots his bolt in mid-air. Is it from Paphos or Mitylene? What the fable? Music plucked down from vibrating skies, music made visible."

First printed in the pages of a newspaper, one wonders

what kind of audience this sort of writing could have had. The reader's road to wisdom, if he accepted it, would seem to be by way of hyperbole and excess—infected by Huneker's prose, we paraphrase William Blake unblushingly. That sentence, "music plucked down from vibrating skies," confirmed a fear we had warded off long enough —that the American nature cannot be beaten in its materialism once it has taken the comfortable turn. Huneker revealed this even in his better moments, and what is more, he revelled in it. Music is not only to be "plucked down from vibrating skies," it is "painted" or "made visible," and once, in a story of his, when a green star drops over Judæa it is "as though music itself were slain." The common identity of the seven arts was, of course, Richard Wagner's dominating theory, and he endeavoured all his life long to practise it. Huneker himself records how Camille Mauclair, a French artist, seriously proposed a scheme for the fusion of the arts. The fusion was to be cerebral: sculpture, architecture, music, drama, acting, painting, and dancing synthesised in the mind. But neither Wagner nor Mauclair—nor any of the others who have been intrigued by the idea, Pater especially—would have tolerated an attempt at synthesis on paper—a daily paper at that, and set down by a critic!

Not only was a common identity of the seven arts attempted by Huneker, but of artistic *genres* and every pleasing thing that came within range of the five senses. And, so far as it went, he made the whole thing delightful —or revolting, according to the way you received him. There are folk who hear painting, see music, touch poems. taste symphonies, and write perfumes, but Huneker beamed across the dinner-table with talk that actually identifies artistic masterworks and the wine, the dishes, the cigars—it is always at the dinner-table that we see him, perhaps because so many of the meetings and talks with the artists of several continents, as recorded in his autobiography,* took place on that common ground of social fellowship. He always knew when he was in Austria, he tells us, because the coffee is much better than the watery, flavourless com-

* *Steeplejack.* By James Huneker. Two vols. Werner Laurie. 42s. net.

pound you are offered in Germany. The Belgian kitchen is richer than the Hollandish, and the wines better and cheaper, and so on. We almost feel that his attitude to the art of the different countries was formed by his experience as an epicure. But it was not. He worked among all the arts with true judgment; he passed from one to the other with an enthusiasm that remained undiluted. When Tolstoy wrote to him, "Sir, I do not like the story of the devil you sent me. I cannot see a fair future for your sinister and ennobled talents" (the message was written in English: did Tolstoy mean *ignoble*?), Huneker was brave enough to recognise his own limitations, and he gave most of his life to the interpretation of other men's work. He explored Europe, and returned to New York with fresh tidings and generally sound pronouncements. He loved to docket his artistic heroes as madmen, wits, saints and sinners, and he captured their splendour, their pathos, and their gaiety for his readers in a way that has no comparison in critical ready-writing. He revelled in allusiveness, confirming one of his author's statements by the words of ten others, checking an English painting by an Italian master, until the reader's mind is as heavily freighted as a catalogue. On one page of his *Ivory, Apes and Peacocks* there may be counted thirty-three distinct references! And, what is more, though he mentioned everybody in every art he seemed to be acquainted with everybody he mentioned. And they, being each the best of his good friends, particularly Shaw and Max Beerbohm, would quarrel with him violently.

There is a poem by Mr. W. H. Davies in which he speaks of the mood of overpowering staleness "holding this mortal flesh," the mystery of mortal life pressing us down. James Huneker must have experienced that dark hour often, creeping into his heart before he was aware. but you would never have thought it from his writing. His was a personality to which, even after his death, we shall be able to turn and find our own zest returning, so full of life is our thought of him, so full he of the power to re-infuse it in others, so life-lusty, glittering, hearty. That we shall pass by the greater men at such times, those for whom our greeting in real life would not have been quite easy, those whose comradeship would have left us always with a sense of reserve, of privilege—is it not human?

Fifty-Fifty

By Austin Harrison

No man mentions the real thing: which is—the debt; the sheer stupidity of the fact destined to constrict Europe for a generation that Europe has a dead-weight charge of over £50,000,000,000, involving, in interest alone, more than double the entire pre-war Budgetary revenues of all countries concerned. Thus Britain. In 1914 we balanced on just over £200,000,000. To-day and every year for our lifetime, we have to find £370,000,000 on interest: then there is the unfunded "paper," £1,300,000,000; there is that debt to America upon which we are not paying interest, our specific debt, and the larger one incurred by us on behalf of the Allies, yet Government actually asks in the next Budget on the Services for a sum greater than the whole national revenue in 1914! When we talk of reparations, this really is the incubus lying like a gigantic blight over Europe. This is the kernel of the problem—paper; leading whither? A fearful nightmare of a constant. To end in what? Gold? Bonfires? Bankruptcies? Who knows? The story of paper finance cannot—it dare not—be told yet. But the fruits remain. It is a disease, a palsy, a world predicament. Civilisation's subject is credit. Instead, we talk of Mesopotamia. "What is the use of a capital ship?" our naval genius chalks up every second week on the national slate. We don't know. No man knows except his midshipman who puts the big ship down. "Fifty-fifty," cries the Prime Minister—the City grins.

The "Hun" is unkind, Mr. Lloyd George explains. "If he won't balance his Budget, we, I, Rex Constantinople — Mesopotamia — Balbriggan — Carnarvon and Coalition Boroughs, will unbalance his trade—by making us pay for it. Fifty-fifty. See. It is an indemnity. We must get something because Mr. Churchill is head of a new

Empire. I must do something, otherwise M. Briand would fall. He and I both feel that all Europe cannot be fooled all the time, because of America—German-American finance. Now observe. If we block up Europe, America cannot sell, and the same, mark you, with Ireland. Some think the trouble is 'holy water.' Well, it ain't, this time. It is America. We squeeze Ireland—America reacts. We fasten down Europe—American finance squeals. 'Hold on,' says he. 'Come on,' says I. 'Take a hand, old chap, in the general recovery.'" So the Prime Minister astride the world, literally like a Colossus, as he ruminates before lunch upon his next cosmic move, strolling on to the Knoll in his endowed estate at Chequers, overlooking the little Kimble church where Hampden and his yeomen raised the flag of rebellion against ship-money. Fifty-fifty. Not in the least. All that is just politics, temporising, playing for time, futility. The facts are the £50,000,000,000 dead-weight debt. Three years after war, we are still Budgeting on about £1,200,000,000, utterly beyond our power. Thirdly, Government is an I who no longer has a mandate: who probably is preparing for a snap election at the right moment to come back as a Centre Tory Party.

We are now once more at war with Germany, and yet, strange to say, nobody seems a penny the worse. A week before Dr. Simons arrived in London our troops in the occupied zone knew they were going, and it is said that the strange magnate rival of Sir Basil Zaharov, Stinnes, is quite pleased at the transaction. Here, no one cares a bob. Even the exchanges don't care. They too are weary of war. In fact, the exchanges are cordially indignant, like Mr. Bottomley waxing pious in his advertisements, and so it is the French franc that has got a knock, not the German mark—which must amuse our new financial genius, Mr. Lloyd George, exceedingly. Here he can lip back: fifty-fifty. If France wants money, good; Germany must export. But France does not want Germany to export, she wants her money. "Did you say gold?" Mr. Lloyd George interpolates. *Pardi!* Perhaps M. Briand meant *coal*, suggests one of the "gentlemen without a duster." "O, Ah," responds Jove, "you want the Ruhr valley.

Well, tell me first, what is the use of a capital ship?" The Viscount Tonnerre-de-Dieu now intervenes with exact suavity. "Sire, it is *capital* we want, not a capital ship; we understand you have actually over a hundred German ships on your hands, which you don't know what to do with." The monarch of all he surveys smiles enigmatically. "'Tis," he exclaims majestically, "'tis that Napoleonic Confederation you really want, which we and Prussia fought you for over a century ago."

The Marquis de Marron Glacé raises his left hand indicatively. "That, Sire, is our right. The Rhine: Security." The basis of credit is security. If we can't get money, we can get security. It is decreed. God is witness. *Cà y est.* The Rhine. French hegemony. *Vive Napoléon!*

One of the dustless duster gentlemen, who is in his leisure hours an historian, cannot check himself. "Then, Marquis, Pitt was wrong?" he ejaculates, and before the Marquis can recover the master magician is at work. "More, a knave. And Nelson, he was wicked. And Wellington, he was a rogue. Fox was right, was he? Napoleon was wrong in calling us shopkeepers, we really are filibusters. Coal—we burn oil. You are obsolete in your methods. I thought you wanted money. I am glad, for we do. Look here, Germany does not matter at all. (Sensation.) Not in the porky least. What counts is America. Credit. Germany cannot pay unless she trades. You don't want her to recover; nor do we. We agree. Good. I have an idea—at last. We will sit on Germany's exports. We will strangle her trade. Fifty-fifty. That equals 100 per cent. (Huge sensation.) You can have it for the Marseillaise. *Marchons.* (The Marquis bows, embraces the master.) You assume. Nothing happens, All the better, you assume more—you anticipate. Essen (the French delegation rise and salute) lies under your guns. You can blow all their sewing-machines to smithereens. It is a noble plan. Never hit a man when he is down. Gentlemen, Germany is disarmed. Poincaré will be silenced; on this side 'Poy' won't be able to draw caricatures, and German-American finance will have its leg pulled. We advance—to draw back. Fifty-fifty. Bluff *versus* bluff. Politics. Glory. A General Election. I."

The German delegation buy mementoes in the Strand and retreat. The Allied troops advance. Nobody cares, the German exchange appreciates. Funny, eh? For two months all the heads of all the bank amalgamations had been making speeches, pointing out that the only way to restore credit, to correct our British "slump," to avoid the crash, was to re-establish European purchasing power, to make peace, to revive the receptive and productive power of Europe, to help all the nations to trade and pay their way, seeing that no nation can flourish on another's poverty, credit being, in the very essence of its mechanism, international. Result—the strangulation of trade, the stoppage of purchasing power—fifty-fifty, the Rhine, war, security, a fob in the eye at German-American finance. Done—nothing. Peace? No, war. St. Patrick's Day? Not a bit. St. Vitus' dance. The French are delighted now that it is quite certain that they can get nothing.

And we? O, we don't count in these islands. We have no say in matters of taxation or policy. Parliament exists as Mr. Lloyd George's registry office. Our job is to pay for Mr. Churchill's soldiers and French imperialism. Sir Percy Scott and his midshipman are only useful in time of danger. To-day, there is no danger, it is the time therefore to build expensive ships. As for Germany, if she refuses to sign a "scrap of paper," then up Napoleon, *Germania delenda est.* Any objectors? Only a few bankers mop their moist brows in their little retreats. Labour approves. Lord Robert Cecil approves. A few newspaper men with incredible moral courage write expostulating articles, for art is creative and there is still some intellectual honesty left, otherwise hopeless and helpless acquiescence in the expectation that something will turn up: perhaps Lenin will be turned out, or Lord Derby will start a Tory ascendancy, or Mr. Clynes may become editor of the *Times*, or the Black and Tans may blow up all Ireland, sky-high, for good and all, or America will let us off that infernal debt.

No good. True, the Germans are incorrigible. One more lie—why not? I spoke to some of the recent delegation. "You have got to pay," I said. "We know,"

was the reply. "Then sign," I retorted, "on the understanding that France will show you *how* to pay, seeing that the problem is one of transfer of value, which is largely a matter of credit." "It would be a scrap of paper," was the reply, "for no nation, not even Britain, could guarantee the payment of £11,000,000,000 with a mark worth 1d." I know. Every banker knows that. It is politics. As the French say, "*plus ça va sans dire, va encore mieux en le disant.*" But the German is no democrat. He cannot think *à la brosse*. Out came documents. "We offered twice what France paid after 1870 in five years. We can only pay in surplus exports, and to-day we are a much poorer people." There was nothing to be done. This time the Germans are not bluffing. The bluff is on America. The war is finance—paper finance. Germany can only pay through organised world credit, through America, in fact. If America will take German bonds, then indemnities can begin. World participation is essential. The channels of international trade must be reopened. For the simple truth is this. If Germany is to pay, Germany must sell. But we don't want her to sell; we want to keep her under. Ergo, there can be no indemnities. Mr. Lloyd George has only enabled the French to realise the unrealisable, by a shift. One shift more. The whole business is a tea-party. Neither side is talking sincerely, or thinking accurately. Only one thing transpires. We have broken the Treaty integral. Historically, it lies already in the dustbin. Its only bite is Napoleon. But Napoleon is dead. The emperor to-day is credit, or Dr. Lenin. We are trying to cure a disease by black magic. It is the wizardry of political opportunism, and it won't draw the card from the new Republican America.

That is where Ireland holds the rubicon, and she shot up for a traitor. The reason is also fifty-fifty—force, the deliration of war. We cannot settle Ireland because the Ulster group control British politics and Englishmen do not know. The lie has been driven into our mentality that Irishmen only respect force, whereas the exact opposite is the truth, for probably no other people in the world are so temperamentally hostile to physical-force obedience as the gentle Irish, fatalists first and foremost in their indi-

vidualism. Ulster knows that only too well, and that is why nothing happens, or can happen, in that unfortunate island. We put up a stranger to play the policeman and our demand is absolute surrender. What then? Will Ulster permit of an integral Ireland? Not so long as Ulster can control the Tories, which means the Army. That is the problem, but it is no longer Great Britain's question; it is our Empire question; more, it is the English-speaking question, and across the body of Ireland our English civilisation will coalesce or break. Ireland is the master-key to world reconstruction: our acid test, our umbilical cord of empire. The hangman's rope will not federate, it will disunite. To invoke Cromwell is nonsense. The very men who appeal to Cromwell to-day are of the stock who cut off Cromwell's head. Over Ireland it is fifty-fifty in blood truth. We are behaving like truant schoolboys in Ireland, refusing school. Ireland could be settled peacefully in a week with the grant of Dominion Home Rule and—responsibility. The Ulstermen know that, but they do not mean us to know it. So long as we pay the bill, what matters? These gentlemen are wrong this time in their history. They are destroying what is more important than our credit—our honesty. They are weakening our civilisation, blunting our conscience. The ignoble truth is that Ireland is fighting as much for our redemption and justification as for her own, and sooner or later now the true heart of England will see and set right. The military side of Ireland is an untruth, the legacy of border politics. If the Empire is to endure its foundations must needs be firm from within. They are cracking. And the fissure will spread until the very soul of our association sags with the dry-rot of hate. The stain is our contamination. It is not Catholic or Protestant. It is civilisation, and unless and until we render unto ourselves what is inherently our national truth and purpose, we shall strike at our own faces and poison the very well of unity. It is destiny. Ireland's peace is our condition and grace of opportunity.

To return to the new German war, what is the game? To drive Germany into repudiation? Hardly, for finance exists on credit, and finance to-day controls. Is it abdica-

tion in favour of the French policy of breaking up Germany? One can scarcely credit so stupid a form of wickedness, rendering certain a second world-war, implying militarism for generations, steeping us pell-mell into the morass of insolvency. No, Mr. Lloyd George is not exactly a Metternich, he must have something "up his sleeve" now that by-elections are telling the rising tale against the blind, implicit obedience mandate of the Coalition which clearly in the country to-day has no constitutional authority, and would be swept away in disgrace were anything in the nature of a working election agreement to be made between Labour and Liberalism. This is the clue. Having proved himself "frightful," the Prime Minister can now claim to be a sound Tory, like the Duke of Northumberland. Protection, which was the difficulty, is the chance—of profits. This is really what has eviscerated Liberalism. In the war good Liberals became munitioneers with conservative effects to their principles. Continue the policy, and Manchesterdom will "key" industries—that is the expectation. The foe is Labour. Oranges or lemons—"I or Trotsky." Dividends or the capital levy. Chequers Park or check-mate. A gentleman or a Bolshie. Dusters *versus* dustmen. Any old thing except "hang the Kaiser": which is a stumour.

The whole of our present difficulties—the slump in trade and politics, the wasteful Budgets, unemployment, taxation, the growing disillusion, the dead markets, the inability to make peace or feel peace—is due to the Versailles Treaty, which split Europe into antagonised zones, politically and economically, and there left the economics, as if men lived and slept on words alone. We are returning to real values, and in the process the false values obstruct the path. Two men cannot settle the world. We cannot police, finance, dispose of and control all Europe, because we cannot pay for it; still less can we treat the world as a sphere of military interest, as Napoleon for a while could in the self-feeding, pre-industrial, pre-capitalist days of feudal demarcations, and until we try to bring about a working settlement on coherent principles of trading opportunity and national contentment, chaos will continue, and even this year we may drift into sheer deadlock. Two years ago Germany

ought to have been told to pay £5,000,000,000 and set free to work and find the money. Otherwise, she cannot pay. If she loses the coal of Silesia, the indemnity will grow less. To go on shouting "Make Germany pay," while depriving her of all ability to trade, is unworthy of a great nation, and it will lead nowhere. What is the meaning of this obtuseness? We simply must resume touch with economic truths if Europe is to be restored and Germany is to pay anything satisfactory, and no amount of sabre-rattling or occupation of German towns will help poor France, who, in the end, will only have herself to blame if, preferring the shadow to the substance, she enforces the break-up of Central Europe into a mosaic of implacable hatreds and economic confusions for a panache. Our coming Budget is the writing on the wall. Three years after war we are to spend more on the services than our entire revenue in 1914. Inevitably. Policy dictates expenditure. It is impossible to predict what costs we may not have to incur this year on our various armies of occupation: in Germany, in Ireland, in Mesopotamia, Turkey, and Persia. We are simply drifting, settling nothing; disrupting, decomposing, strangling trade and all credit recovery. For what? Why not first answer Sir Percy Scott's conundrum? It would be ever so much cheaper in the end.

There is a way out, and it is to start afresh; to call in America and with the New World to begin the amortisation of our own Allied debts as the pivot to solid foundations of a world policy, in which good work without a doubt America would join. She will not come in merely as the underwriter of chaos; merely as the broker of bad debts; merely as the "joker" in the pack. It is curious to turn back to history at this juncture, for we have to-day almost an exact replica of the Metternichian "Holy Alliance." But credit in those day did not matter, whereas to-day it is the missing link as between Lord Leverhulme and Trotsky. And there is no Tsar and no—Talleyrand. That is the main difference. All cinemas but no gesture. In no country an inspiration. So lopsided is reason that the very men who smashed President Wilson's idealism now clamour for his idea, yet we do not even laugh. The new American President's address read so peculiarly like Mr.

Wilson's phraseology that at once the question is mooted: how many new capital ships? There, the disease is Ireland, and notably it is Sir E. Carson who shouts for more ships, for to him Ireland is the enemy and America the resultant objective. Are we to submit to this infatuation? Is there to be no intelligence No decency? No statesmanship? Is the Cenotaph to be merely an effigy? Are taxpayers to have no right of say anywhere? Is this to be all? A ship-building competition? Just that over again. The answer is definite. It is No. The man who seeks that war is an enemy to his own race. We shall not be misled by such perverted clamour. We shall not be the simple pawns for the next world-war, and here the Empire will pass judgment on whatever man or party proclaims it. So much we can predict. If the coming "Centre" Party is to be framed up upon the corpse of Ireland to build against America, then indeed the war will have been fought in vain, and we shall have signed away our heritage.

But our lemurs and time-servers will shortly be discomfited. The time is soon at hand now when men will once more be compelled to think constructively. Economics will force the pace. The first thing is policy. What is to be our policy? We cannot continue to drift merely as the satellite of a militarised European grouping, whose needs are not our needs economically, whose idea of peace strikes at the roots of our prosperity. That issue is intensely real for us and our sons, and in the same connection is America. We shall have to choose soon between credit or war—co-operative utility or militarism pure and simple, at home and abroad. Our war governmental mechanism is dissolving. The one-man show is tumbling down, and in the dissipation the national energies are crystallising into new forms and associations. That is the psychology of the situation. But as yet there is no light. An election rough and tumble round a red lamp will not evolve salvation. New foundations will have to be sought and laid. Principles are needed, convictions, enthusiasms, above all some conscious sincerity of purpose. An empire must have a policy; a mind, at least an equation or equilibrium of fellowship applicable to the world which economically is one. Either we socialise or we antagonise. Is the

Empire to stand for peace, that is, for opportunity, or for competition, *i.e.*, war? We are poor hands as bullies, anyhow.

About Europe we can say this. No ultimate peace is obtainable in the absence of Russia, so that necessarily all territorial delimitations in the East of Europe are contingent, relative, temporary—makeshifts; and in this respect even our economic mechanism is involved. Europe may not return to the old industrial conditions, may not be able to. From the point of view of population, it was an artificiality even before the war, thriving upon low wages and world stability. Both conditions are to-day at issue. A poor, disheartened, uneconomic centre must impoverish the rest, which without credit cannot revive. To-day we are feeling the effects of causes. Decline is general. Last year's "paper" boom brings into relief the true condition, which is stagnation due to war, fear of war, preparation for war, and the likelihood of indefinite war groupings. Europe is a barrier of tariffs, penalisations, and military strangulation. Purchasing-power lies at the dictates of military commissions. Trade is marketed by animosities. Credit is still the printing-press. What to do with Austria reduced to a city? With Turkey? With Poland? With Russia? With Germany? With Greece? With the Arabs? With Persia? With our own peoples within the Empire? Who knows? There is no settlement, hence no peace, no confidence. Perhaps America will help, perhaps she won't? These are the direct consequences of the so-called peace—fifty-fifty. The life issue is credit. But that demands peace. Happily for us, the coming Budget will bring home to trade the meaning of indefinite war.

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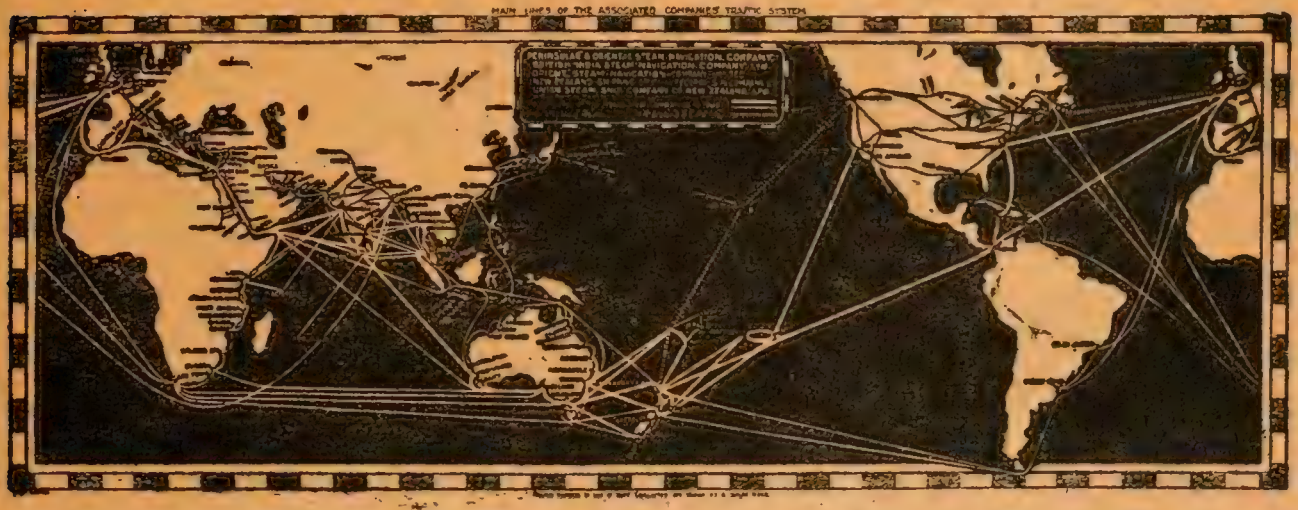

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Books

ARCHÆOLOGY.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF TERRA SIGILLATA. By FELIX OSWALD and T. DAVIES PRYCE. Longmans. £2 2s. net.

THE authors of this admirable and most valuable work have named it too modestly. It will form not only an introduction, but probably the classic English text-book, for expert or amateur, on the study of Roman red-glaze pottery (often erroneously called "Samian ware"). How long such a work has been to seek, all archæologists know. The authors state that it was during their excavations at the Roman station of Margidunum, in Nottingham, that they were struck by the necessity of laboriously collating innumerable references (to Terra Sigillata) in many languages. Future explorers, spared this need, will have cause for gratitude.

I like greatly the chronological arrangement of the work with regard to the aspects and developments of the ware, and especially the very convenient grouping of facts and examples under the heading of the various Dragendorff forms. Of the use of this, and of

the list of attested stamps, I can speak from practical experience. The volume is completed with a careful (though alarming) bibliography, and the eighty-five plates both add enormously to its value and are a striking testimony to the care and skill of Dr. Oswald, who has prepared them. A. E.

ART.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING. By CHARLES MARRIOTT. Chapman and Hall. 21*s.* net.

DESIGN AND TRADITION. By AMOR FENN. Chapman and Hall. 30*s.* net.

MESSRS. CHAPMAN AND HALL have now issued two out of the four volumes at present announced in their Universal Art Series, under the general editorship of Mr. Frederick Marriott. The books published deal respectively with certain of the more important modernist developments in painting; post-impressionism, and its carrying forward into cubism, and the work of the vorticists; and, in the second volume, with the whole sequence of design in ancient and modern art. Both works admirably combine simplicity and comprehension. Mr. Charles Marriott has, of the two editors, the more difficult task—that of interpreting painting through the medium of print. He commands a lucid style, which, helped by the many excellent reproductions, mostly from modern French and English painters, should enable the amateur or student to lay down a most useful foundation of knowledge. (Though, incidentally, I could wish him not to have been betrayed into the ugly verbal trap of reference, in his acknowledgment, to "*Messrs.* Colour, Ltd."!) Wealth of illustration also adds enormously to the value of Mr. Fenn's exposition of the history of the arts and crafts. These two beautiful volumes, which should find a place in every public library of reference, will certainly increase expectation for those (on illustration and the art of the fashion plate) which are to follow. A. E.

BIOGRAPHY.

THE TRUE STORY OF THE EMPRESS EUGÉNIE. By the COUNT DE SOISSONS. John Lane. 12*s.* 6*d.* net.

THE "Second Empire" of France was certainly an adventure, seen to-day in the light of history if anything the clearer as we emerge from the Great War. It unmade France, it made the German Empire; and from that French imperialism sprang Bismarck's imperialism, which eventually was to involve Europe and the world in carnage. Count de Soissons in this bright tome apportions the blame, pointing to the Empress as the inspiration of Napoleon's blunders, showing the reason to have lain in the extraordinary vanity and irresponsibility of the celebrated Spanish beauty who married an Emperor. There is no cause to question the accuracy of the Count's charges, which he presents like a courtier. She was France's second Marie Antoinette. She encouraged the Mexican War; she was the soul of the war of 1870. The Emperor was a

curious mixture of good and bad; he never could command his Empress. It is a sad little fragment of history, useful because it shows how history is made by fragments, and how only too often the fragmentary conditions and controls.

ESSAYS AND GENERAL LITERATURE.

NOTES ON LIFE AND LETTERS. By JOSEPH CONRAD. Dent. 9s. net.

ONE almost jumped at the prospect of reading Conrad *en déshabille*, on himself, but this, as he himself explains, is not to be; the quiet elusiveness of the great writer on the sea remains a mystery, like his element. These things are republications, drawn from platforms as different as the *Daily Mail* and the ENGLISH REVIEW; re-read, they mark emphatically genius. Conrad on Henry James, who has so largely influenced his style, and on Marryat, is particularly interesting. It is a curious reflection that the two great sea writers Conrad and Fenimore Cooper are, or were, so little known. Few Englishmen know Cooper for his sea books, and until Conrad was lately discovered the public did not know him, whereas Marryat has long been a tradition. Conrad shows why. Marryat was "the completely successful expression of an unartistic nature": that is the truth. He stood for the "service," not the sea; he incarnated a tradition. Probably no one will ever surpass Conrad's works on the sea, and in these little criticisms of books and writers we get a glimpse of the curious subtlety, the penetrating comprehension, the elliptic emotionalism of a mind absolutely sincere and radiantly creative in the true art sense. On politics Conrad is an emotional nationalist, but his article "Autocracy and War" (1905) is a masterly *résumé* which events have justified up to the hilt, especially his contention that out of a "grave" no evolution would be possible. This is a remarkable book in many ways, for Conrad is never the journalist. Here we can sense the vibrant chords of creation that make Conrad our greatest living writer and the supreme artist on the sea.

WHY WE SHOULD READ. By S. P. B. MAIS. Grant Richards. 9s. net.

MR. MAIS dismisses the critics amusingly enough in his preface, and then proceeds to demonstrate some of the beauties of certain English classics and some selected contemporaries, with enough examples to whet the appetite. Four modern books on the English language are then discreetly skimmed, before passing to the consideration of Montaigne and the Russian galaxy, as "certain foreigners." Mr. Mais knows that a taste of the stuff itself is better than any amount of description, and his pointer travels from picture to picture with persuasive ease. From "Tom Jones" to Tchehov, this anthology is entirely stimulating in matter and commentary; good alike for those who know the outsides of books and the insides, and even for the many who prefer to have their reading

done for them, dine off *hors d'œuvres,* or dip into the page wherein the sweets compacted lie. Literature is no dull subject in Mr. Mais's hands.

From Public School to Navy. By Lieut. W. S. Galpin, R.N. Underhill, Plymouth.

The special entry scheme of which this book is both handbook and record has been proved by the stern test of war to be a successful innovation. As the preface, by Viscount Curzon, M.P., points out, it is not always possible or sound to determine a boy's *rôle* in life at thirteen years of age, although the Navy's way of catching her sucking Nelsons young has worked with marked success in the main. Still, the public-school boy of eighteen or so is more likely to know his real mind, and to exclude him altogether is to deprive the Fleet of good British stuff. A list of public schools shows a pretty wide appreciation of this way into the sea Service, although the entries have fallen off since peace broke out. Eton has sent thirteen of her men into the Navy by this path, Haileybury twenty-five, St. Paul's twenty-three, Rugby sixteen, Harrow eight, and so forth. This well presented and illustrated record explains the whole course of procedure, and gives printed and pictorial records of the successive years men and their instructors. Altogether a workmanlike and lucid record of a significant movement.

Human Life and the Body. By Dr. Rabagliati. Stockwell. 5*s.* net.

An essay in which the author contends that the body not only remembers its past, but predicts its future; that, given a chance, by abstinence we should live longer, more completely and happily, and fulfil our ethical and physical destiny more quickly—a well-written and well arranged plea for a new conception of physical life and its significance.

FICTION.

A Romantic Man, and Other Tales. By Hervey Fisher. Secker. 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

Readers of the English Review will probably recall a couple of the stories in this collection—"A Strange Wooer" and "Broken Lights." It is good to find them again, together with eleven other examples of Mr. Fisher's art, individual and stimulating enough to deserve this more permanent form. All his stories are unusual and provocative, often deliberately "unpleasant" in theme, but throughout touched with distinction of manner. In "A Strange Wooer" the rush of an unusual situation is well sustained for the length of its twenty pages. "A Romantic Man," on the other hand, has all the leisured irony of a day when such temperamental sketches were more frequent in our literature than now. Mr. Hervey Fisher is an artist from whom larger work may be expected with interest; especially should he cultivate the gift for delicate comedy shown here in "A Scholar's Experiment." A. E.

BOOKS

THE POISONER. By GERALD CUMBERLAND. Grant Richards. 9*s*. net.

IT is not quite clear who the poisoner is, whether whisky, music, love, or heredity. Whisky, of course, is the effective agent in driving the temperament-ridden Martin S. Favart to suicide, but the poison was in his music when he was as dry as the United States, and his erotics were as tame as the dreadful secret of his dead father. Had it not been hinted that his mother drank, the whole curious psychology of the handsome and brilliant young composer would be incomprehensible; and there is only the lightest allusion to this mother. So let us abandon the title and come to the book. Mr. Cumberland writes about music and its inner meaning and spiritual significance with great power and charm; he has also the enviable faculty of painting a background and rounding a character with precision and ease; but it is too great a call upon his art to make dipsomania interesting.

When a prodigal son becomes a periodical son, one almost hopes for the worst instead of the best. None the less, this book is abundantly clever, written with a strong sense of reality, without descending to realism, and kept on a serious and restrained note. Monica, the patient and loving, is a sweet personality. The episodes are skilfully diversified; the musical environment suggested with brilliancy. It is only the tragedy which fails, in the end, to be tragical, because the progressive implications of horror somehow do not "resolve."

MAINWARING. By MAURICE HEWLETT. W. Collins, Sons and Co. 7*s*. 6*d*. net.

THIS book has all the thumbmarks of a Hewlett, distinctive as the Rodin touch; but masters do not always function at their best. "Mainwaring" will take its place in the complete works as a not too convincing study of manners and politics in the 'eighties, with inherent peasant virtue shaming aristocratic lightness, and with Mainwaring himself a foil for both. This tall, cadaverous, black-bearded political adventurer has no particular prototype that one can remember, although he moves amongst thinly disguised personages; a devastating figure, whose brilliancy and fascination one accepts upon the word of the admirable Mr. Whitworth who tells his story. You are not asked to like Mainwaring—nobody does—but you are asked to believe in him, and, as Mr. Hewlett has a dominating way with him, you probably will. What matters is whether you like and believe in Lizzie of the primal beauty and wisdom, for this, one feels, is the mainspring of the matter and concerns the very soul of Hodge. Mainwarings are always with us, picturesquely in sword and cloak and less tolerably in trousers and taxis; but if we can breed Lizzies in sufficient numbers England may be England yet! Cannot the Middle Class League get somebody to say a word for our Joans and Mollies?—for, frankly, there are not enough Lizzies surviving to go round. Anyway, the "Hodge" motive is the heart of the story, and Mainwaring just a vivid and unusual super-egoist who serves to focus some curious social contrasts and situations such as Mr. Hewlett constitutes with bold and

telling strokes; but one somehow grudges the author of "Forest Lovers" and a dozen other delights to this sort of modernity.

THE BREATHLESS MOMENT. By MURIEL HINE. Lane. 8*s.* 6*d.* net.

THE story of a wealthy girl who, being left penniless on the death of her father, becomes housekeeper to an elderly spinster and her nephew in a deserted part of England. The development from this point is on original and "advanced" lines, but the whole thing is excellently done. It is not so much the sticking to the beaten track that matters with *The Breathless Moment* as that the beaten track is trodden with exquisite grace. Incidentally, the story is an interesting contribution to the problem of the unmarried mother.

COLOUR-BLIND. By S. P. B. MAIS. Grant Richards. 9*s.* net.

IT is a little disconcerting, when one has embarked for the island of Cythera, to find that the gay shallop, with youth at the prow and folly at the helm, is ballasted with guide-book sentiment and quasi-serious talk. Harlequin may be an ordinary member of society in private life, but he should reserve that aspect of his personality for other occasions. Mr. Mais has a vivid gift for rapid presentation of the erotic-heroic; his exploits of Jimmy Penruddock with the three slender and delightful sylphs, Margery, Evelyn, and Joan, gallop along pleasantly enough, and all his briskly slapped in backgrounds have their fascination. If only the figures would avoid serious talk altogether and get on with the brisk business of love and "entirely right week-ending" this extremely post-war story would be better. The author is quite right about Jimmy's colour; when he sees it at last, it is distinctly cerulean.

INTO THE DARK. By BARBRA RING. Gyldendal. 8*s.* net.

MANY good things come from the Danish house of Gyldendal, for there is a fine modern literature in the Scandinavian countries which English readers have sufficient spiritual kinship to appreciate—and the Gyldendal books are well Englished. Barbra Ring's *Into the Dark* is a case in point of strong artistic work with enough strangeness of atmosphere only to add to its charm. It is the story of a woman's body, mind, and spirit in conflict, of her yielding to her humanness and sinning against the light—told confessionally before making the supreme expiation. But there is nothing morbid in her self-revelations; she will not pose as victim, saint, or sinner, but simply lays bare her soul that the man to whose measure she has failed to attain may perhaps forgive. A very human and pathetic story of a sweet life caught in the toils of circumstance and her own ardent nature.

EGHOLM AND HIS GOD. By JOHANNES BUCHHOLTZ Gyldenhal. 8*s.* 6*d.* net.

EGHOLM was as mad as a hatter—your Boreal writer revels in pathological psychology—but Egholm's attitude towards his peculiar God, his dreams, and his magnificent conceit of himself are such a delicious caricature of our smaller self-sufficiencies that we not only suffer him gladly but delight in him. The opening picture of the

religious community with its sordid evangelist angels, and pastors, and all the tale of squalor and hardship lit by the inventor's dreams of success strike a fascinating note. The poor shifts and clinging subservience of Egholm's wife and children would be poignant and pitiful stuff were it not for the wit and ironic sympathy of the author, who makes from this material a story which holds the reader's interest, not alone by its strangeness nor by its implications of cruelty and terror, but by a very perfect artistry unforced and unflinching. Another remarkable Gyldendal translation.

POETRY.

THE AUSTRALIAN AND OTHER VERSES. By WIL. H. OGILVIE. Sydney: Angus and Robertson; London: Humphrey Milford. 4*s*. 6*d*. net.

ONE has heard before of the pride with which Australia and New Zealand regard the work of Mr. W. H. Ogilvie, and the quality of this his latest book is quite good enough to explain it. The title is taken from the poem commemorating the landing at Anzac ("The bravest thing God ever made"), which appeared in *Punch*, attracting there deserved admiration by its spirit and music. These are indeed the twin excellences that mark all Mr. Ogilvie's writing. His war verse is eloquent of sincerity, neither clap-trap nor jingo, but breathing in every line a passionate patriotism both for his colonial home and for the Mother Country. This, however, occupies but part, and not the largest, of the volume; there are others, mostly inspired by a wistful and tender love for the Bush, full of the refreshment of pure air and wide spaces. The book will undoubtedly add to the number of its author's admirers on this side, especially as some of the narrative poems (though perhaps the least successful of the collection) are sufficiently dramatic to constitute, we fear, an irresistible lure for our amateur elocutionists.

POLITICAL.

EMPIRE AND COMMERCE IN AFRICA. By LEONARD WOOLF. Allen and Unwin. 20*s*. net.

THE African question is viewed by most men as a patriotic policy which has enormously enriched the country. Few realise that in reality this economic imperialism benefits mainly financiers, concession-hunters, and a small band of settlers and land-owners; that it will soon become a palpitating imperial problem; that over Africa in great probability imperialism, as we know it, will stumble. In 1880 Africa was still free; to-day we and the French own the entire continent. The author writes the history of this evolution. He shows that finance began the thing, that actually the French colonies add little to the wealth of France beyond black troops, that Germany lost on her million square miles ownership, that Algeria, in fact, chiefly provides France with wine, cereals, and other foods, the other products enriching financiers, who sell in the dearest market,

so that the whole French African Empire was responsible for less than 8 per cent. of her export trade, and less than 7 per cent. of imports. Similarly with our African Empire. The East Coast of Africa only supplies 2 per cent. of the food and "raw" required by British industry—which is the alleged case for this imperialism. Despite the dreams brought before the public, the East Coast of Africa is economically a negligible quantity to us, however it enriches financiers, and this work is carried on by indentured native labour, virtually slavery, in the name of patriotism and Christianity. In this exact and informative work the African story is unfolded. It is like a pantomime. This is civilisation. But a new thing is happening. The natives are becoming self-conscious. As that educative development takes root and form, a new problem will begin. Meanwhile, we shall no doubt acclaim our possession of Africa as beneficial to industry and labour, and wave flags, greatly to the joy of financiers, company promoters, and concession-hunters. Wise men will read this careful work thoughtfully.

WAR.

FRANCE AFFLICTED, FRANCE SERENE. By ANTONIO DE NAVARRO. Chapman & Hall. 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

THIS filmification of War impressions is a pæan, and comes as near to being an idyll of war as one can imagine. Its spirit is French and the theme is the sacred fire. It is interesting as a series of impressions caught headlong, but there are pathos and dignity of writing and obviously a great love for France and for the French soldiers. It is a pity these things were not given to the world a year ago, for the mind of man cannot live on the top note of war three years after peace, and so one has to throw oneself back to the ardours of the time to enjoy to the full this graceful homage.

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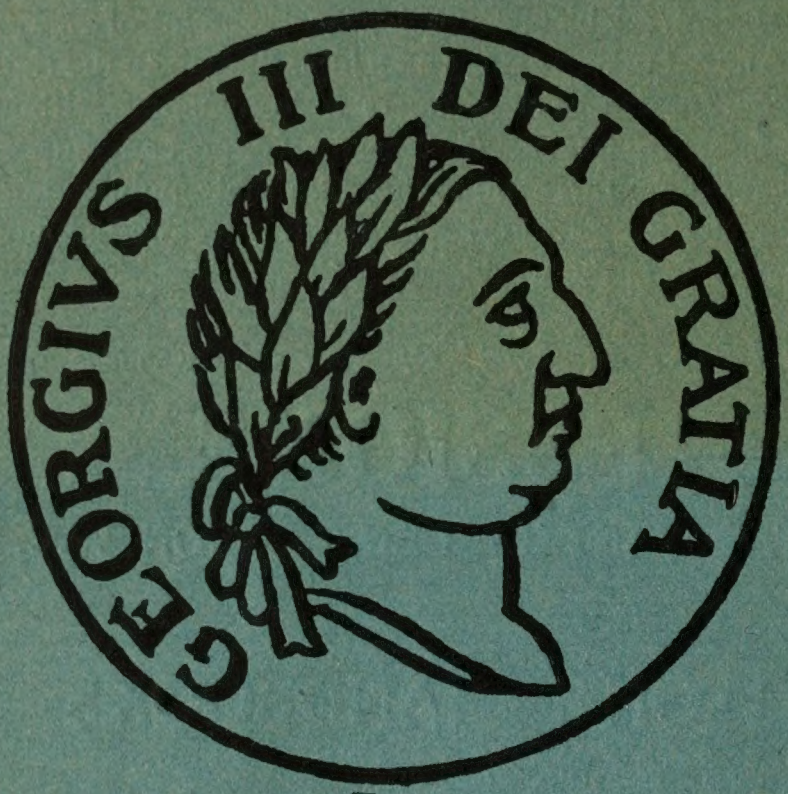

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